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REFLECTIONS ON MARY'S SPIRITUAL MOTHERHOOD

ALL the greatness of Our Blessed Lady flows from the Divine Maternity. The Immaculate Conception, and the fullness of grace bestowed on her, were the preparation of God's first earthly dwelling, and the honour paid to her now as Queen of Heaven and earth is the acknowledgement of her unique dignity as Mother of the Incarnate Word. Of all her many titles, the noblest is that of "Mother of God", that simple phrase, eloquent of all the theology of the Incarnation, which rises unceasingly from millions of Catholic hearts each day in the prayer which the Church has taught us to address to her.

But in all ages the faithful, with that sure Catholic instinct which often outstrips theological knowledge, have extended Mary's maternal role to all the human race which her Son came to redeem. For every true Catholic, Mary is in a very real sense a mother, and all men are her children. Saints have looked to her, as St. Teresa did, to take the place of an earthly mother taken from them by death. We turn to her in every need with the trusting confidence of children, and in the worship we offer her there is more than reverence—there is a tenderness of devotion, a personal affection which bears a distinct resemblance to the human love of a child for its mother.

Theology teaches that devotion to Mary is an essential part of Christian life, and we are even told that it is a sign of predestination. Two things follow from this—first, we must strive by every means to cultivate this devotion in ourselves; and secondly, it must be a real devotion, not an affair of sentiment. The very element of tenderness which is its special characteristic offers a danger to the unenlightened, and may lead them to be content with a mere emotional attitude. True devotion must rest securely on—or, better still, must grow out of—a knowledge of her prerogatives and of the providential part she was called upon to play in the work of our Redemption.

Mother of the Redeemed

All that Mary means to us rests upon the fact that freely and willingly she co-operated in our Redemption. Theologians are still discussing the precise nature and extent of this co-operation, but what emerges already from these discussions is that her part was an active one, and that she was very intimately associated with her Son in His work of salvation, so that more and more frequently today we see applied to her the title of "Co-Redemptress".

Now the essential role of a mother is to have a share in giving life to her child. It is this that makes her a mother, and the tender love, the unceasing care, the self-sacrificing devotion which we associate with the name

of mother, attractive and lovely qualities as they are, follow only by way of consequence upon that first great gift of life. In the spiritual order, the Redemption, in which Mary had so great a share, means to us the difference between life and death: "God (who is rich in mercy), for his exceeding charity wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together in Christ" (Ephes. ii, 4, 5); "I am come that they may have life, and may have it more abundantly" (John x, 10).

From the beginning Mary knew and accepted this spiritual motherhood. The Angel, on the day of the Annunciation, told her that she was to bear a Son Who would redeem mankind: "Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins" (Matt. i, 21). She well knew what this meant. With her profound understanding of the Scriptures, she knew that the Messiah was to be the Man of Sorrows vividly depicted by David and Isaias (Psalm xxi; Isaias liii); and she saw clearly that, as His mother, she would have to share those sorrows. Only at this price could life be restored to a world long plunged in death. Thus, when she gave her consent to the Incarnation, she saw herself not only as Mother of the Redeemer, but also as Mother of the redeemed, the second Eve, "mother of all living", just as her Son was to be the second Adam, sole source of divine life for all the race of men.

Bethlehem

"And she brought forth her first-born son, and wrapped him up in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger." In poverty and abandonment the Son of God came into the world which He had created; the Victim of Divine Justice took His place among men, as a member of the human race for which He was to die. His first act, as St. Paul tells us, was to offer Himself to His Heavenly Father, as the one acceptable sacrifice which alone could atone for sin: "When he cometh into the world, he said: Sacrifice and oblation thou wouldst not: but a body thou hast fitted to me: Holocausts for sin did not please thee. Then said I: Behold I come" (Heb. x, 5, 6).

Thus began Our Lord's work of Redemption, and with it Mary's spiritual motherhood; for the two are strictly parallel, and the various stages of the work of Redemption mark also the development of Mary's role, in our regard. Spiritual writers, following St. Bonaventure in particular, usually speak of Mary as becoming our Mother on Calvary, and there are excellent reasons for this view; but for the full understanding of her spiritual maternity it would seem better to consider it in a wider aspect.

At Bethlehem was born the new Head of the human race, and in the divine plan men were to receive, through union with this Head as members of a single Mystical Body, the life of grace lost by Adam's sin. Thus, in the sight of God, Head and members are one, so that the birth of the Head in the flesh already implies the spiritual birth of the members. Mary, in giving birth to her Son, entered at the same time upon her spiritual motherhood of those

who were to be "born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (John i, 13).

It is in this sense that Pope Pius X wrote in his Encyclical *Ad diem illum*: "The Blessed Virgin did not conceive the eternal Son of God merely in order that He might be made man, taking His human nature from her, but also in order that by means of the nature assumed from her He might be the Redeemer of men. . . . Wherefore, in the same holy bosom of His most chaste Mother, Christ took to Himself flesh, and united to Himself the spiritual body formed by those who were to believe in Him. Hence Mary, carrying the Saviour within her, may be said to have carried also all those whose life was contained in the life of the Saviour. Therefore, all we who are united to Christ and are, as the Apostle says, members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones, have issued from the womb of Mary like a body united to its head. Hence, though in a spiritual and mystical fashion, we are all children of Mary and she is mother of us all."

Calvary

All the doctrine of Redemption centres around Calvary. By the divine decree the Saviour was to atone for the sins of men by suffering and death. He accepted this decree from the first moment of the Incarnation, and submitted to every detail of its execution, "becoming obedient unto death, even to the death of the cross" (Philipp. ii, 8). Calvary is consequently the central point also of Mary's spiritual motherhood of men. In this supreme hour the Mother was with her Son: "There stood by the cross of Jesus, his mother . . ." (John xix, 25). Every torment of those endless three hours had its counterpart in her exquisitely sensitive soul; her Compassion accompanied His Passion step by step, and but for a miracle she would have died with Him. Thus, as by that death Jesus merited to become for all men the source of life, by her Compassion Mary merited to have a share in the giving of that life to men; she paid the price of her motherhood. "She was on fire with a limitless love for us, and, in order to have us for children, offered her own Child to the Divine Justice, died in spirit with Him the while her heart was pierced with a sword of many sorrows" (Leo XIII, *Encycl.* "Jucunda Semper").

It is thus we must see Mary on Calvary. She suffered with her Son, but she suffered for us; she watched death slowly overtaking its Victim, but in that death she saw our life, and the Blood that drained from His many wounds did not, to her eyes, merely sink into the wood of the cross and the barren soil of the hilltop, but flowed in endless streams over the sin-stained souls of men. As her Son had taken upon Himself the sin of Adam, she took upon herself the curse of Eve: "I will multiply thy sorrows, and thy conceptions. In sorrow shalt thou bring forth children" (Gen. iii, 16).

For this reason Catholic tradition has always seen a deep and very real meaning in that scene, perhaps the most touching in all the Gospel, when our dying Saviour gave His mother into the care of St. John and told him,

in words that have echoed in countless hearts down the centuries, to look upon her as his mother: "Woman, behold thy son. . . Son, behold thy mother" (John xix, 26, 27). "Mary, as His Mother, as the Mother of that vital influence which has given life to that mystical body, in so far is also the Mother of that body. In a true though mystical sense the living members of that body can look upon her as their Mother; the Mother of Jesus Christ according to the flesh is the Mother of all His members according to the spirit. And as if He would Himself formally confirm and sanction that interpretation, as if He would encourage His disciples to draw it out to its logical conclusion, Jesus Christ Our Lord suffered to be enacted and to be recorded for all time that memorable episode on Calvary. . . . From that moment and because of the commission, every loving disciple of the Son has taken the Mother to his own heart. This is no novel or fantastic interpretation of the passage of St. John. It has come down through the ages, from and beyond the days of Origen" (Goodier, *The Inner Life of the Catholic*.)

Pentecost

On Calvary our Redemption was accomplished, in the sense that the price of atonement was paid, but the plan of God was not yet completely realized. Our Lord had to rise from the dead, that His Resurrection might be the exemplary cause of our own spiritual resurrection: "For we are buried together with Him by baptism unto death: that as Christ is risen from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we also may walk in newness of life" (Rom. vi, 4). Also, means had to be established for transmitting to the souls of men the merits of the Passion; this means was the Church, which was founded on the day of Pentecost.

"I will give you another Paraclete," Our Lord had said; and when He sent the Holy Ghost upon the Apostles assembled in the upper room His work was complete. Through the Apostles and their successors the fruits of His Passion and Death would be distributed to the souls of men, and a rich harvest garnered for eternity: "For if by one man's offence death reigned through one: much more they who receive abundance of grace and of the gift and of justice shall reign in life through one, Jesus Christ" (Rom. v, 17).

Now, the Church which was founded that day was no mere religious organization, but a living organism, the Mystical Body of Christ. We must not judge the effects of the coming of the Holy Ghost solely by the miraculous transformation wrought in the Apostles. Something far deeper and far greater had been done; a new creation, parallel to that of the first man, had been accomplished. God, we are told, formed the body of Adam, and then breathed into it the breath of life. So also Our Lord had gathered together His Apostles as the material elements of His Mystical Body, and at Pentecost the Holy Ghost came upon them as a living soul, so that they became a single organism, endowed with vital forces of growth

and activity, and forming with Christ, the Head, what St. Augustine was later to call "the Whole Christ".

It was the crowning of Our Lord's work on earth, the fulfilment of all the divine plan for our Redemption; later would come growth and development, but nothing essential would or could be added to it. So also was it the fulfilment of the divine plan concerning Mary. The motherhood of men, accepted at the Annunciation, implicit in the birth of her Son at Bethlehem, merited on Calvary, was finally bestowed on her at Pentecost. For it is in and through her Son, Who gave us life, that she is our Mother, and we receive life only when, becoming members of the Mystical Body, we enter into vital union with Him. It is, then, as members of the Mystical Body that we are children of Mary. As it was at Pentecost that the Mystical Body was first formed, it was then also that was realized Mary's spiritual motherhood of men.

The urgency of her prayer, it is said, moved God to anticipate the time of the Incarnation, and brought down the Holy Ghost to make fruitful her virginal womb. So at Pentecost, in answer to her prayer, the Holy Ghost came down upon those who were to be the first members of the Mystical Body. There is a tradition, or a legend, which says that the Divine Spirit first appeared as a globe of fire which rested upon the head of Mary and then separated into tongues of fire which rested upon the Apostles. Whether this be true or not, it expresses perfectly how to the end Mary was associated with God's plan of salvation. Mother of the Head, Mother of the Body and of all its members, her Divine Maternity and her motherhood of men blend into one, and are seen to be not two distinct things but two aspects of her single providential role, Head and Body alike being "conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary".

Our Mother in Heaven

The practical consequences of Mary's role as Mother of men follow the ordinary teaching of theologians on the Beatific Vision. The Saints in glory see God, and in Him they see all that concerns the people, places and things in which they have a particular interest. Mary's spiritual motherhood gives her, as it were, an official position with regard to her children; and since her motherhood is co-extensive with the Redemption, i.e. universal, her interest extends to all the race of men. Hence in the Beatific Vision she sees every human soul: she knows the state of each, the graces it needs, the dangers which threaten it. Ceaselessly she pours out her prayers for them, using to the full her power over her Son, "omnipotentia supplex". She, who in her lifetime refused nothing that God asked of her, cannot now meet with a refusal; she who loved men, even to the extent of giving her Son to death for their sake, cannot now be indifferent to their needs; here is the basis of our unbounded confidence in Mary. St. Paul tells that Our Lord is now "always living to make intercession for us" (Heb. vii, 25), and St. John saw Him in vision before the throne of God, "a Lamb standing

as it were slain (Apoc. v, 6), the mute eloquence of His five wounds pleading always for the souls of men. So Mary also pleads for us, offering in our behalf the sorrows by which she shared His Passion.

Since Mary's motherhood is of the spiritual order, it is our spiritual needs that have first claim on her maternal care. Above all else, she wishes to see in our souls the life of grace; she echoes Our Lord's own words; "That they may have life, and may have it more abundantly." It is here we see her as the true Mother of souls. She was associated with Her Son in the meriting of grace; now she is associated with Him in its distribution. No soul receives grace save through her hands, as Benedict XV wrote: "Because of Mary's intimate union with the Passion of her Son, all the graces which we draw from the treasury of the Redemption are distributed by the hands of the Virgin of Sorrows."

Those who have not yet shared in the benefits of the Redemption, and are therefore as yet only potentially her children, are nevertheless the object of her solicitude. She prays that they may receive the light of faith and the life of grace, as Jesus Himself prayed the night before He died: "That they may know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent" (John xvii, 7). In response to that prayer there descends upon the vast world of pagans, Jews and Moslems a stream of graces, the full fruits of which will be known only in eternity.

Then there are souls who have received the life of grace, and lost it by sin. As she sought her Son in Jerusalem, Mary seeks the erring soul, for every sinner who falls away means that she has lost a child. More than that, she sees them as dead in their sins, and like the woman who asked the prophet for a miracle (IV Kings, iv), she knows no rest until they are restored to life.

Those in the state of grace are in the full sense her children, for it is through her that they receive the life of the soul. Mary protects and fosters this life, as an earthly mother watches over the bodily health of her child. And as a mother trains her child, forming its character by precept and example, so Mary forms her spiritual children to that Christian perfection of which Our Lord is the model; with even better reason than St. Paul, she can say: "My little children, of whom I am in labour again, until Christ be formed in you." Here we see the marvellous unity of the divine plan in regard to Mary; her spiritual motherhood of men is the continuation and the fulfilment of the Divine Maternity, for as Origen wrote: "One who is perfect no longer lives himself, but Christ lives in him, and when Christ lives in him, of him we may say to Mary: Behold thy Son Christ." It was from this point of view that St. Augustine envisaged Mary's spiritual motherhood when he wrote: "All the predestinate, in order to be conformed to the image of the Son of God, are in this world hidden in the womb of the most holy Virgin, where they are protected, nourished, brought up and made to grow by that good Mother until she has brought them forth to glory after death."

It would be a mistake, however, to think that our Heavenly Mother is concerned exclusively with our spiritual interests. Innumerable favours, like the healings at Lourdes, testify that she has a care for our temporal welfare also. We are body and soul, and, like any good mother, she looks after both. Indeed, in her care for our bodily needs she is but continuing what she began as Mother of Our Saviour. It is a fact we are apt to lose sight of, that the services she rendered to her Son were of the purely material order, for on the spiritual plane it was He Who gave and she who received. To be the Mother of God meant, in concrete detail, preparing meals, making and mending garments, attending to the thousand and one duties that are the lot of every housewife. In this connection, it is perhaps not without significance that the only favour which the Gospel records as granted in answer to Mary's prayer was of a very material nature—an extra supply of wine, to save a newly-married couple from disappointment and embarrassment on their wedding day.

Real devotion to Mary springs from such thoughts as these, viewed not as mere theological speculations but as realities affecting our own lives. Mary loves us, and has suffered for us; and the measure of her sorrows gives us some idea of the greatness of her love. To her we owe, under God, Redemption, and grace, and our hope of eternal life. She is the Mother of God, the Queen of Heaven, but we in our littleness are the object of her ceaseless tender care, and no detail of our spiritual and material well-being escapes her vigilance. If we think on these things, we begin to see that the rhapsodies of the Saints, and the apparent extravagance of their language in speaking of Mary, in reality fall far short of what is due to her. We see why devotion to her is for every true Christian as necessary as it is natural. To praise and honour Mary, to pray to her, to develop in ourselves some faint resemblance to her—all this is but to give her that place in our lives which God Himself has assigned to her. She is, by God's decree, "our life, our sweetness and our hope" in this world of exile, and if Heaven is indeed our true home, it is not least because there a Mother gathers her children around her for eternity.

THOMAS B. FINAN, C.S.Sp.

THE CULTUS OF OUR LADY AND THE GRAECO-ROMAN WORLD

AN ALLEGED INSTANCE OF RELIGIOUS SYCRETISM

IT has often been said that Catholicism is an amalgam of Judaism and Paganism, containing little, or nothing, original in it. Much of the rationalist propaganda of thirty or forty years ago based itself on this thesis. But among the present generation few are, I fancy, familiar with the writings.

of Edward Clodd, the stalwart East Anglian iconoclast, or the once popular *Orpheus* of Salomon Reinach. Even the encyclopaedic *Golden Bough* is now, I believe, but little read and the modern student does it no greater homage than occasionally to refer to its index. This development is, perhaps, in part to be ascribed to the fact that, in so far as people think about these things at all, many are apt to take for granted the truth of the thesis to which I have alluded and regard attempts to prove it like flogging a dead horse. Under cover of this assumption it is argued, or perhaps, it would be more accurate to say, asserted, that the cultus of the saints is an adaptation of polytheism, rendered necessary to win adhesion to the new faith on the part of the masses who abandoned heathenism on the cessation of persecution in the fourth century. The embellishment by Pope Damasus of the tombs of the martyrs was, so it has been said, a contrivance designed to facilitate the transference of its allegiance by the Roman populace from Jupiter and his colleagues to the crucified Nazarene.

Cognate with this assumption is another, which includes among what Hobbes called "relics of Gentilism" the honour paid to the Mother of Christ by Catholics and by members of the Orthodox Eastern Church. The cultus of Mary, it is maintained, is but the continuation under a new name of the worship of the goddesses of motherhood and fertility, diffused in antiquity throughout Western Asia and the Eastern basin of the Mediterranean, and makes of Greek and Latin Christianity something fundamentally dissimilar from the Protestant Christianity of the North. We seem to catch an echo of Disraeli's boast that half Christendom worshipped a Jew and the other half worshipped a Jewess. In the capacity, either of consort, or of son, these goddesses had usually associated with them a subordinate male divinity. The latter combination created the art-type under which Christian painters and sculptors later portrayed the Mother and Child. If we take a tour through the lands, where ancient civilization grew up and flourished, the mother-goddess meets us everywhere. Even at Jerusalem her cult intruded itself. For Solomon erected a shrine to Ashtaroth the "abomination of the Zidonians" (III Kings, xi, 5). This form of heathen worship survived for over three centuries till it was suppressed by Josias (IV Kings xxiii, 13). Ashtaroth was the goddess,

... "Whom the Phoenicians called
Astarte, queen of heaven, with crescent horns;
To whose bright image nightly by the moon
Sidonian virgins paid their vows and songs".

The main centre of her worship was at Byblus on the Syrian coast. This Semitic Venus was the counterpart of the Assyrio-Babylonian goddess, Ishtar,¹ who herself replaced an earlier Sumerian mother-goddess. At Paphos in Cyprus she blended with Aphrodite. The mariners of Tyre and

¹ In South Arabia Ishtar was worshipped as a male divinity.

Sidon carried her worship across the sea to Africa and at Carthage Astarte became known as Tanith, whom the Romans called "Caelestis". In his novel *Salammô*, Gustave Flaubert gives a description of Tanith's temple, where cakes, shaped like the crescent moon, were sold. The museum at Carthage contains terracotta figurines representing a woman holding a child and we do not know whether they represent the great Punic mother-goddess and her nameless offspring or whether they are of Christian origin. Akin to these goddesses was Al-Lât, the nature-goddess of the pre-Islamic Arabs, whom Herodotus (iii, 8) identified with Venus.

Egypt too had her mother-goddess, Isis, wife, as well as mother. Her worship became popular in Rome in the time of Sulla and spread throughout the Empire. So dear was it to the hearts of the people that it gave way but slowly before the advance of Christianity. As late as 417 the rites of the Egyptian goddess were performed at Falerii in Etruria, and in her original home, the valley of the Nile, Isis continued to be worshipped by the Nubian tribes, after Egypt had been christianized, till her, now submerged, temple on the island of Philae was closed by order of Justinian. At Hierapolis in Northern Syria the worship of Astarte merged into that of Atargatis, the *Dea Syria*, in whose honour sheep, goats and other animals were burned alive at the spring festival. Fishes were sacred to Atargatis and traces of her worship, incorporated into Islam, linger today in the sacred fish, kept in the pools of the chief mosque of Urfa, the ancient Edessa. The worship of this goddess was propagated by merchants far beyond the confines of Syria. The analogous mother-goddess of Asia Minor was called Ma in Cappadocia and Cybele in Phrygia. Artemis, the nature-goddess of Ephesus, had likewise much in common with Cybele and Ma and became identified with the pre-hellenic Cretan goddess, Britomart.

Passing now to Europe we find in Crete that the Phrygian goddess had become identified with Rhea, the local divinity who was sister and wife of Cronos and mother of Zeus. In the time of Virgil the two had become so far fused that the poet states that Cybele, "*mater cultrix*", had come from Crete. (Aeneid iii, 3). The Phrygian goddess received the titles of *Mater Deum Magna* and *Magna Mater Idaea*. She delighted in the clanging of cymbals, the noise of drums and pipes, the howling of wolves and the roaring of lions. Her worship was brought to Rome from Pessinus in response to the demand of an oracle during the Second Punic War. Nor did ancient Italy lack her own nature-goddesses, Ceres and Tellus, Maia and Ops, the Bona Dea.

It would be a mistake to see in these female divinities nothing but different names for one goddess, and, though a large measure of syncretism took place, it did not in all cases reach the point of complete identification. Artemis was, at one time at least, patroness of chastity: Aphrodite was patroness of immorality. The worship of Isis remained distinct from that of the Great Mother under the Roman Empire, though they might occasionally share a temple or a priest. Nevertheless it seems legitimate to see in these

goddesses the embodiment of the same principle and, as it were, emanations of an original female divinity, whose cultus reached far back into pre-hellenic times and conceivably even to the Old Stone Age.

To an inquiring mind which has interested itself, but to a slight extent, in the study of ancient religion there must have occurred this question: why is it that the divine is conceived of more readily under a female aspect among some peoples and in some places and under a male one in others? Mr. Bernard Shaw once, I believe, said that the only Christian doctrine with which he felt any sympathy was that of the Immaculate Conception since, so he alleged, it secured the place of woman in the godhead. Such a remark, made at a time when the agitation for female suffrage was reaching its climax, might win for its author some cheap popularity. But the claim that man is impelled by some mysterious psychological law to invest the Supreme Being with specifically female attributes we must reject. In monotheistic religion God is without sex and even in polytheism there is a tendency to regard the divinity as transcending its limitations. We have evidence of this in the numerous hermaphrodite deities met with in ancient and in oriental religion. There was a bearded Aphrodite and a bearded Isis, perhaps also a bearded Tanith. Brahma and Siva among the Hindus, Neith among the Egyptians and Freya or Friga, the Venus of the Northmen, are sometimes represented as androgynous. That these bi-sexual divinities had their origin in observance of the, comparatively rare, malformations which occur in the reproductive organs of human beings seems scarcely probable. It is more likely that the problem of the sex of a divine being proved so baffling to the human mind that the knot was cut by the ascription to it of both male and female attributes, and probably Arnobius was right when he expressed his belief that, no more than a philosopher, could the common man believe that there existed distinctions of sex among the immortal gods. (*Adv. Gentes* vii, 19).

Yet we must try to offer some answer as to why these distinctions were ever made. We know that among peoples living outside the pale of revealed truth political and social conditions are strongly reflected in their ideas about the supernatural. Is the same true with regard to natural surroundings, created by variations in climate and vegetation? Is it that where nature is bountiful men tend to worship her as a mother, and that where she reveals her harsher aspects, in scorched deserts or on bleak steppes, a male divinity dwelling in the sky becomes an object of adoration? There are obvious reasons why the sky should be thought of as masculine and the earth as feminine, but the well-known scholar and archaeologist, Dr. D. G. Hogarth, offered a somewhat different answer to this question. He suggested that peoples whose principal activity was war tended to worship a male deity, while peaceful agriculturalists and herdsmen, to whose minds the phenomenon of birth was always present, more naturally invoked a female one. To ascribe the predominance of female divinities to the social phenomenon known as "Mother-right" or *Mütterrecht* is, he says, to mistake

effect for cause. "Mother-right," according to the late Dr. W. H. Rivers, "is a form of social organization in which the rights of a person in relation to other members of his community and to the community as a whole are determined by relationship traced through the mother."¹ At one time there was a tendency to ascribe the origin of "Mother-right" to a supposed primitive state of sexual promiscuity in which the importance of fatherhood was relatively small or, even, to a primitive state of society, in which the relationship between birth and sexual intercourse was not properly understood. We may dismiss such theories. Another and more probable view is that which attributes mother-right to social conditions in which woman has, chiefly from her functions in connexion with agriculture, come to occupy a position of increased importance. If this is the case, we may believe, as Dr. Hogarth suggested, that female divinities became especially prominent in connexion with advances in agriculture.

This scholar had been impressed during his travels in the Levant by observing how Moslems, no less than Christians, would pray before icons of Our Lady, and though he put forward this view in no scornful or derisive manner, he was convinced that the cultus of the Blessed Virgin was but a later manifestation of the ideas which of old had found expression in the worship of the Nature-goddesses. "Hear," he says, "any Greek or Italian peasant in a moment of excitement or danger. He calls on no Person of the Trinity, but on the Virgin. For him her power does not come from her motherhood of her Son. Indeed, I have known Christian countrymen of a West Anatolian valley to whom that motherhood was evidently unknown, and when spoken of remained without interest or significance."² It would not of course be fair to treat the least instructed Christian peasants as typical of all, but it would be rash to deny that ignorance of this kind actually exists.³

Another Oxford scholar, the late Dr. F. R. Farnell, for many years Rector of Exeter College, has in his Gifford Lectures on *The Attributes of God* maintained a similar point of view. "The fervent votary of the Virgin," he declares, "is touched unconsciously—it may be—by race memories of Isis, Artemis, Cybele or the Cretan goddess" (p. 106). "The monotheism proclaimed by Christianity," he says, as so many said before him, "becomes unreal where Mariolatry is strong" (p. 50), and he concludes, going further than some, that, not only Catholicism, but even orthodox Protestantism, belong to the higher forms of polytheism and that of all who claim the name of Christians the Unitarians alone can be set down as pure monotheists. Writers of this school not unnaturally draw attention to the fact that it was at Ephesus that Our Lady received the title of mother of God and see in the

¹ Art. "Mother-right", Hastings' *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*.

² *Religious Survivals*. Presidential address Section H. British Association 1907 (Report, pp. 629-638).

³ Bishop Bellord somewhere relates the case of a girl who after gaining a prize in Christian doctrine at a Catholic School was found to be under the impression that Our Lady was Our Lord's wife.

popular jubilation which accompanied this event an expression of devotion to Artemis, the Great Ephesian Mother, covered by a thin veneer of Christian piety. Of those who feasted and sang to celebrate the proclamation of Mary as Theotokos, Farnell remarks "these are the same people who some six [four] centuries before 'all with one voice about the space of two hours cried out, Great is Diana of the Ephesians' and their mood on the two occasions was the same, the mood of passionate devotion to a Virgin Mother Goddess" (p. 100). For, if Mary be not a goddess, says the Gifford Lecturer indignantly, then the word is stripped of all meaning. Dr. Hogarth takes the same line, saying that, at the Council of Ephesus, the Great Mother came into her own again. On the other hand an American scholar, Professor Grant Showerman, judges of the event somewhat differently. "The mere title *Mater Dei*," he says, "then coming into frequent use, would instantly provoke a comparison with the *Mater Deum* and the formal bestowal of the former title on the Virgin in Council in A.D. 430 [431] might well have seemed in the eyes of the Pagans like despoiling their former goddess even of her title." (*The Great Mother of the Gods* (1901) p. 329.)

That in accidental matters devotion to the Blessed Virgin has been deliberately substituted for the devotion to a pagan goddess is of course beyond question. A church dedicated to Mary was built on the foundations of the temple of Isis at Soissons; at Cyzicus in Asia Minor the temple of Cybele was converted into a church dedicated to Our Lady, as was the Parthenon itself in the sixth century. A certain amount of unconscious substitution of this kind seems also to have taken place, of which an instance may be given. As is well known, there exist two traditions with regard to the last years spent by Our Lady on earth. One of these, and, it seems the more probable of the two, makes Jerusalem the place of her death. The other, accepted by Cardinal Newman, and made popular in the last century by the revelations of Anna Katharina Emmerich, locates this event at Ephesus.¹ About fifty years ago a Catholic priest in Smyrna who had been reading Klemens Brentano's *Life of the Virgin* which was based upon these revelations became anxious to locate the site of the house which Our Lady had occupied during her supposed sojourn at Ephesus. On inquiring locally as to whether there existed any sites, considered to be especially sacred to the Blessed Virgin, he was directed to one which, he was assured, was holier than all others. He acquired the site and instituted two annual pilgrimages to it, on Wednesday in Easter week and on the octave of the Assumption. But the place to which the Catholics of Smyrna flocked, though unknown to them, was in reality Ortygia, where, according to the old myth, Leto gave birth to Artemis.

But the school of thought which we are considering makes a claim far more sweeping than a mere assertion that such accidents have occurred. It

¹ The belief that Our Lady lived at Ephesus after the Ascension was of course suggested by the residence in that city of St. John the Evangelist and not by the fact that it was the centre of the worship of a Mother Goddess.

affirms the existence of an organic connexion between the worship of the mother-goddesses and the cultus of the Blessed Virgin. The Church, so it is asserted, finding that she could never, by preaching an austere monotheism, win over to her allegiance the pagan masses, resorted to tactics similar to those by which a politician sometimes climbs into power by adopting part of the programme of his opponents. For reasons of policy, they assert, the Bishops proclaimed Mary to be Mother of God and encouraged devotion to her so that the votaries of the nature-goddesses might enter the fold without experiencing any acute psychological disturbance. Such arguments are generally put forward by persons who have either little conception of objective religious truth or, perhaps, no conception at all. But we need not deny that divinities like Cybele and Isis did exercise a very powerful influence on the minds of their worshippers. The relation of mother and child is the most touching of human relations. There may be more of romance in the constancy of lovers, in the loyalty of a liegeman to his lord or in the fidelity of friends; but the complete dependence of the child on the mother reminds us of the relation between God and man more completely than do they. When therefore there flocked into the Church pagan multitudes whose religion had found its focal point in the adoration of a heavenly mother, they must have been much more psychologically predisposed towards devotion to the Theotokos than would be an English Protestant, who had been taught that devotion to Our Lady was idolatrous or at best something which came perilously near to idolatry. Such converts would not have been likely to take what Father Faber would have called "low views" about Our Lady. It would probably have been difficult to have got them to take an interest in any other aspect of Christianity and the distinction which theology draws between *latría* and *hyperdulía* might not have been readily conveyed to their minds. Sometimes there may have been no clear line of demarcation in their thoughts between the religion they were forsaking and that which they were, at least nominally, embracing, as seems to be the case with the Cypriote peasants who according to Hogarth (*op. cit.*) anoint the corner-stones of the ruined temple of Paphian Aphrodite on the feast of the Assumption and according to Perrot and Chipiez invoke Our Lady as "Panaghía Aphroditessa".¹ But the scholars to whom I have referred rest their case primarily upon the assumption that devotion to the Blessed Virgin is something alien to the spirit of Primitive Christianity, declaring, as does Dr. Hogarth, that for long she was in no way distinguished in Christian thought from other holy women and only began in the third century to assume "semi-divinity", which last admission would be shocking enough to many old-fashioned Protestants.

Those who use such arguments as these have no use for *a priori* reasoning. But refusal to recognize that a woman, whose child is the Son of God, by that very fact, is placed in a different category from other holy women does not help matters. Father Thurston may well, however, be right in

¹ *History of Art in Phoenicia and Cyprus* ii, 226.

saying that "it is not impossible that the practice of invoking the aid of the Mother of Christ had become more familiar to the more simple faithful some time before we discover any plain expression of it in the writings of the Fathers."¹ The horror of idolatry evinced by the first Christians makes a pagan origin for this, to say the least, improbable. We may look for its genesis, or rather for the occasion of its development, in another direction. Among Western nations widowhood is associated with retirement and the mother of a sovereign, unless she should happen to be regent, is expected to practise some degree of self-effacement. But in oriental monarchies the ruler's mother has often been a person of great political importance, and even in the Ottoman Empire, despite the seclusion of women, the Sultana-Mother might be a person to be reckoned with.² This prominence attaching to a king's mother was the inevitable product of a polygamous society. For though a man may have several wives he can only have one mother. Under the Roman Emperors, who were of Syrian birth, the Empress-Mother held an exceptional position; Heliogabalus gave consular rank to his mother, Soaemias, and her sister, Mammaea, exercised paramount authority during the reign of her son, Alexander Severus. At a later date petitions to Constantine were doubtless often made by Christians through the intermediary of St. Helena. The custom of seeking favours from an earthly king through the intercession of his mother most probably encouraged among the early Christians, with their vivid faith in the Communion of Saints, the practice of approaching the King of Heaven with petitions addressed through Mary.

Yet when we have said this it may be objected that we have not necessarily said more than that the cultus of Our Lady had its roots, not in any specifically pagan rites, but in a natural human impulse, albeit one which is deep-seated. If the early Christians had been mistaken, if the Lord whom they worshipped had not been the Incarnate God, but only a great prophet, this same impulse might have led them to invoke her who bore him. That it was the action of the Holy Ghost which has made Christians turn with confidence to the Mother of the Redeemer, we are assured by the voice of the Church which God has commissioned to teach us what He has revealed about Mary's place in the scheme of our redemption. The month which is now beginning perhaps derives its name from the Roman goddess, Maia or Maiesta. Even if the alternative derivation which finds its origin in *maiores* be adopted, nevertheless *Maia* and *maiores* both come from the same root. This goddess presided over the growth of living things, especially those of the vegetable kingdom, and her feast was kept in May. In Mary, presiding over the growth of charity in Christian souls, we see fulfilled the nobler of those aspirations of the human heart to which the worship of Maia gave dim utterance.

HUMPHREY J. T. JOHNSON.

¹ *Art.* "Blessed Virgin, Devotion to", *Catholic Encyclopaedia*.

² Even in Czarist Russia, the most oriental of the European monarchies, the Empress-Mother occupied a position of special importance, being placed on a footing of equality with the Emperor's wife.

THE USE OF PARABLES

THE above title is capable of being understood in two ways, either of the use actually made of parables or of the utility and effectiveness of parables; this paper will have something to say on both aspects of the question. The writer has been stimulated to put pen to paper by a tendency in certain quarters to describe the use of parables as being widespread in the ancient Near East, with the suggestion that the recognition of this alleged fact may have far-reaching consequences in the understanding of the Old Testament; and also by another tendency to attribute our Lord's use of parables exclusively to the desire to clothe His teaching in the simple, picturesque, and easily intelligible form of the parable. Are these two tendencies well founded in fact?

For the sake of accuracy it should be premised that the word parable is here used in the sense familiar to us all and most readily illustrated by the parables of our Lord. The word is, of course, used in the Bible in other senses, as in Psalm lxxvii, 2, "I will open my mouth in parables", where the parables in question are wise sayings conveying lessons for the present drawn from the history of the past. With such other uses we are not concerned.

Is it true to say that the use of parables to convey religious and moral truths was common in the Near East in pre-Christian times? As we are concerned with the Semites, and as we possess no pre-Christian literature of the Arabs or the Abyssinians nor (outside the Bible) any writings in the dialects of Aramaic, including Syriac, the question practically narrows itself to the Assyrians, the Babylonians, and the Hebrews. The Assyrian and Babylonian literature recovered by excavation is now extensive, but it does not appear to contain so much as one parable. There were fables dealing with the fox, the horse, the ox, the dog, and the calf. Unfortunately the texts preserved are all too fragmentary to enable us to reconstitute any one of these stories in its entirety. But the fable is not the parable, though there are points of similarity between the two; and the incomplete fables known are few in number. For the Old Testament I would quote Alfred Edersheim as giving an opinion unbiassed by consideration of our present question. Apart from parabolic descriptions and utterances he finds one fable in the Old Testament, that of Joatham in Judges ix, and two parables, that of Nathan in II Sam. xii and that of the vineyard in Is. v. In view of the length of the Old Testament and the variety of authors responsible for its different books, the number of parables is very small, even if additions are made to Edersheim's list. Most writers of the Old Testament make no use of them at all. In pre-Christian Rabbinical teaching Strack and Billerbeck record that only one parable is known. This had Hillel for its author and dates from about 20 B.C. His disciples asked him one day whither he was going. He said that he was going to carry out a com-

mandment; and when pressed what commandment this was, he replied that he was going to take a bath. His disciples then wanted to know whether that was the carrying out of a commandment. Hillel answered that it was, adding that if the official in charge of the royal statues washes and cleans them, and is not only paid but honoured for his work, how much more should he carry out the same duty being made in the image and likeness of God!

Even when we turn to Christian times, when the parable had been, so to say, widely advertised by its use in the New Testament, there appears to be no trace of it in Syriac or in Ethiopic literature. Rabbinical usage was different in the schools of Babylonia and of Palestine. I quote Strack and Billerbeck again for the statement that the parable is surprisingly rare in the former, whereas all authorities agree that it is common in the latter. The Rabbi Meir in the second century was celebrated for his frequent recourse to the parable. Indeed, so high was his reputation for the handling of this particular literary form that there were said to be no more parable-makers after his death. This, by the way, is an excellent example of another literary form current among the Hebrews, that, namely, of stating relative truths in an absolute form. The meaning of the saying is not that parables ceased after the death of Rabbi Meir, but that his use of the parable was so pre-eminent as to put all others into the shade. There is a similarity between some Jewish parables and those of Christ. In Edersheim's opinion, "It is possible that the framework of some of Christ's parables may have been adopted and adapted by later Rabbis"; and he adds that "no one who knows the early intercourse between Jews and Jewish Christians would deny this *a priori*". It has been suggested to me in conversation that the difference between the Babylonian and Palestinian schools in the use of parables may have been due precisely to the closer contact of the Palestinian Jews with the Christians. This suggestion is supported by the evidence of the Gospels, which show that the use of parables was not common among the Rabbis of Palestine in the time of Christ. When our Lord began to teach the people in parables, the disciples were astonished and asked Him, "Why speakest thou to them in parables?" (Matt. xiii, 10). If it had been the local custom to teach in parables, the disciples would not have asked this question. This evidence, joined to the existence of only one pre-Christian Rabbinic parable and their paucity in the Old Testament, leaves no room for doubt that the frequency of their use among Palestinian Rabbis was an exclusively post-Christian phenomenon. And, in view of the known early relations between Jews and Jewish Christians, the most obvious explanation of the change is to be found in the Christian Gospels and in the public use of parables by Christ in His preaching, all of which was well known to the Scribes and Pharisees.

The use of parables, therefore, provides little enough evidence to warrant important deductions as to the interpretation of the Old Testament. There is, besides, a vital difference in form between parables and those Old

Testament narratives which, it is claimed, should be parabolically interpreted. The Rabbinic parables are introduced by some formula such as, "I will tell you a parable"; "to what can that be likened?" Our Lord's parables begin with the phrase, "The kingdom of heaven is like to . . ." or with such phrases as, "A certain man had two sons"; "Hear ye another parable; there was a man, an householder"; "There was a certain rich man". The parables of the New Testament are not linked to famous historical names as are the so-called parabolical narratives of the Old Testament. Of quite a different type is a narrative such as, "Adam knew Eve his wife, who conceived and brought forth Cain. . . . And again she brought forth his brother Abel. And Abel was a shepherd and Cain a husbandman." I cannot help thinking that the proposed parabolical interpretation of such passages is due to an apostolic desire to facilitate the conversion of non-Catholics. The desire is laudable but the approach is questionable. We would all admit that it is not possible to sacrifice a particle of the truth in order to remove stumbling-blocks from the path of those outside the fold, and, this being the case, we ought not to allow any missionary zeal to influence our judgement. We ought to attempt to discover from the sources of revelation what is the truth. In such an inquiry it is not relevant to take into consideration what would be the reaction of those outside the Church. We should not forget the rather sharp words which Benedict XV in his Encyclical *Spiritus Paraclitus* directed against those who too readily (*nimis facile*) have recourse to the plea that certain narratives are historical only in form.

We now come to the second question, whether it is correct to speak of parables as a simple and easy form of instruction by which spiritual lessons are graphically imparted through the analogy of the objects and lessons of everyday life. The Apostles did not think so. Our Lord seemed to them to be speaking to the multitude in enigmatic language and they asked Him, "Why speakest thou to them in parables?" (Matt. xiii, 10). They themselves, even after all they had heard of their Master's teaching, did not understand the parable of the sower. "When he was alone, the twelve that were with him asked him the parable" (Mark iv, 10). Before asking an explanation they waited until they were away from the crowd, instinctively realizing Christ's intention not to speak plainly. Our Lord's answer showed that they were right. "Because to you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given" (Matt. xiii, 11). He wished all to come to a knowledge of His kingdom and to enter therein, but by now it was clear that the majority had hardened their hearts against His teaching. So Christ added: "For he that hath, to him shall be given and he shall abound; but he that hath not, from him shall be taken away that also which he hath." In its context this dark saying means, "He who has received my teaching with a good will and has let it produce good fruit in his soul, shall receive further teaching and shall abound in its good effects; but he who has not listened with a good will and has not let it produce good

fruit, shall lose even the clear teaching he has hitherto received." Our Lord then explains in clearer language: "Therefore do I speak to them in parables, because seeing they see not, and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand." This clearly means not that they could not understand, but that they would not. Christ then goes on to say that "the prophecy of Isaias is fulfilled in them". This does not mean that Isaias had uttered a prediction about the hearers of the Messiah but that what Isaias had written of his own contemporaries was verified also in the Jews contemporary with Christ. St. Matthew quotes the text of Isaias vi according to the Septuagint: "For the heart of this people is grown gross, and with their ears they have been dull of hearing, and their eyes they have shut; lest at any time they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears and understand with their heart, and be converted and I should heal them."

The Jews, then, by their obstinacy had rendered themselves unworthy of further clear teaching from Our Lord. Indeed, it would have been useless, since they were determined not to hear with their ears nor to see with their eyes. It was, in fact, by a merciful dispensation that Our Lord withheld it, as thereby He saved the Jews from the greater sin of obduracy which He foresaw they would have committed. The text as given in St. Mark offers some difficulty, as it apparently attributes to Our Lord himself the intention that the Jews should not understand and should not be converted. "To them that are without all things are done in parables, that seeing they may see and not perceive, and hearing they may hear and not understand, lest at any time they should be converted and their sins should be forgiven them" (Mark iv, 11f.). Similarly in St. Luke: "To the rest in parables, that seeing they may not see, and hearing may not understand" (viii, 10). This intention or purpose is apparent only, not real. Our Lord desired the salvation of all men, not least of those of His own race, and it was for all men that He came to die. How could He wish positively to prevent any from seeing the light? Various solutions of the difficulty have been proposed. I think the true answer is to be found in the Hebrew manner of speech by which the effect of an action is spoken of as its purpose. Thus, for example, in Psalm l, 6, David says: "To thee only have I sinned and have done evil before thee, that thou mayst be justified in thy words and mayst overcome when thou art judged." Now no one will maintain that David sinned with this intention in mind. Understood in this way the accounts of Mark and Luke present no divergence from that of Matthew.

The explanation of this difficult passage may be illustrated from St. Irenaeus' work *Adversus Haereses*: "Just as the Lord spoke in parables and wrought blindness in Israel that seeing they should not see, as He knew their unbelief, in the same way also He hardened the heart of Pharaoh, that seeing how it was the finger of God that was leading out the people, he should not believe but be plunged into the sea of unbelief." The reader will notice how St. Irenaeus speaks of the use of parables as producing blindness in Israel, but to attain to his full mind on the matter we must

note also what he says at the beginning of the same paragraph: "If, therefore, God, the foreknower of all things, has now delivered over to their unbelief whomsoever He knows will not believe, and turns away His face from them, leaving them in the darkness which they chose for themselves, what wonder then if Pharaoh too who would never believe, together with his associates, was delivered over by Him to their unbelief?" IV, 29, 2 (Migne 7,1064). If the Saint says, therefore, that God "wrought blindness in Israel" he means only that God abandoned them to the darkness which they had deliberately chosen.

We must not exaggerate this aspect of Our Lord's attitude. His very use of parables that did not carry their own explanation with them was a stimulus to all in whom there remained a spark of good will to come and ask their meaning. This is the point stressed by St. John Chrysostom: "If he did not wish them to hear and be saved, he ought to be silent, not speak in parables; but as it is, he stimulates them by the very fact that he speaks in dark language. . . . Do not tell me that he spoke obscurely, for they could come and ask questions, as did the disciples; but they did not wish to" *Hom. 45 in Matt. n. 2* (Migne 158,473).

Finally it should be remarked that what has been said does not apply to all parables, but to unexplained parables, to parables whereto no clue has been vouchsafed. Parables once explained and understood are certainly a means of imprinting a lesson vividly on the mind.¹

EDMUND F. SUTCLIFFE, S.J.

THE CHURCH AND THE FORGIVENESS OF SIN

MANY today appear to judge religion by its success in social and economic reform, and by what it has done to improve the conditions of the less fortunate members of the community. There is a demand that religion should prove itself by pointing to its good works, because, as the Gospel tells us, the good tree must bring forth good fruit. No one, of course, would deny that religion must produce such results in the society in which it flourishes, and those inquiring into its claims have a right to expect them, but not at the expense of ignoring its prime purpose, which is spiritual. After all, religion is concerned first and foremost with man's relations with God, and only secondarily and in consequence with man's relations with his fellow men. The tendency to make it synonymous with humanism must be avoided. Accompanying this misleading appraisal of

¹ Some may be glad of a few bibliographical indications on the second part of this paper. L. Fonck, S.J., *The Parables of the Gospel* (1915) chap. ii; U. Holzmeister, S.J., "Vom angeblichen Verstockungszweck der Parabeln" in *Miscellanea Biblica* I (1934) 201-244; I.-M. Vosté, O.P., *Parabola Selectae* I (1933²) cap. iv; A. Edersheim, *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah* I (1883) 578ff.

the part to be played by religion is a tendency to deny to the Church the spiritual powers that are vital to the mission she has been sent to accomplish. And so it comes about that the important matter of the forgiveness of sin is regarded as a divine prerogative with which the Church and her ministers ought not to interfere. While rightly stressing the "*Tibi soli peccavi*" of the repentant David, one should bear in mind that, though God alone can forgive sin, He may choose to do so directly or through those who represent Him. That, in fact, he chose the latter way is proved from the clear and unequivocal words of Our Lord to His apostles in John xx, 23: "Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them: and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained."

We can and do use these words with telling effect to establish the Church's claim to remit sin, but they seem to derive much greater force if they are considered in their setting. It is the context which focuses our attention on their full meaning, and shows us that the power to forgive sin is not only an integral and necessary endowment of the Church founded by Christ, *but that it was intended to be its outstanding characteristic* as it was the outstanding characteristic of the mission of Christ himself. "As the Father hath sent me, I also send you." The Church is to relive Christ, to re-present Him to those who would come into the world long after His earthly life was over.

The whole earthly life of Our Lord was marked by a solicitude to save from sin those to whom He had been sent by His heavenly Father. "God sent not his Son into the world to judge the world," He said to Nicodemus, "but that the world may be saved by him." (John iii, 17.) Through Jesus the whole human race was to be delivered from the thralldom of sin and restored to friendship with God. Every stage of his life is intimately connected with the remission of sin. Before His birth, while He was still in the womb of His holy Mother, it was foretold that remission of sin would characterize His mission: "Fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife, for that which is conceived in her, is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son: and thou shalt call his name Jesus. *For he shall save his people from their sins.*" (Matt. i, 20-1.) The world into which He was to come was prepared by divine providence for one who would take away mankind's heavy burden of sin. Zachary, for instance, speaking of the newly-born John the Baptist, prophesies of him that he would prepare the way for Christ by announcing to the people a coming salvation *which would consist in deliverance from sin*: "Thou wilt make known to his people the salvation that is to release them from their sins." (Luke i, 77.)¹ The Baptist carried out the commission and fulfilled his father's prophecy, in the first place, when he preached a baptism whose reception both symbolized repentance and prepared its recipients to accept Jesus, who would actually take away their sins (Luke iii, 3; Acts xix, 4, 5); and secondly when he completed his task of forerunner by pointing out the Messiah as "the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world." (John i, 29.)

¹ Knox trans.

Undoubtedly this remission of sin is brought about by the atoning death of Christ on Calvary, for the "Son of Man came to give his life a redemption for many," but the stressing of this primary and all-important aspect of the remission of sin should not obscure for us another, though secondary, aspect of it, namely *his personal remission of sins through the instrumentality of his sacred Humanity*.¹

How frequently, for example, we read in the Gospels of sinners receiving from His divine lips the absolving words of pardon and the assurance and consolation of forgiveness! Almost at the outset of His public ministry He is discovered listening with sympathy to the timid Nicodemus, raising the hopes of the despised and sinful Samaritan woman, dining with the friends of the publican Levi to the disgust of His hypocritical opponents. Frequently He appears as the refuge of fallen sinners: the sinner woman whose many sins were forgiven her because she had loved much, the woman taken in adultery whom He refused to condemn but commanded to sin no more, Peter the apostle who denied Him, the Good Thief who blasphemed Him, but was pardoned and promised the blessedness of paradise. He tried to restrain even Judas who betrayed Him by appealing to him under the winning title of friend. He chose Levi, a publican, to be His apostle and visited the house of yet another publican, Zacheus, where He openly proclaimed that the "Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." (Luke xix, 10.) On this account He was severely criticized by His enemies: "And the Pharisees and Scribes murmured saying: this man receiveth sinners and eateth with them." (Luke xv, 2; xix, 7.) Jesus counters their criticism with the consoling parables which illustrate the love and care of God for each repentant sinner: the story of the shepherd who leaves the ninety-nine sheep to seek the one that was lost, of the woman who searches for her lost coin and rejoices with her neighbours upon finding it, of the prodigal son welcomed again into the house of his father.

This primary purpose of the Saviour's earthly ministry is strikingly shown forth by an incident which took place quite early in His public life. Jesus had been preaching but a short while, when the crowds who came to hear Him began to appreciate the beauty and simplicity of His teaching, to marvel at His miracles, to stand in awe of His authority. Inevitably rumours of what was taking place made their way to Jerusalem and caused dismay among the religious leaders of the nation. They sent representatives to find out what was taking place in Galilee. Soon Our Lord was confronted with His bitterest opponents: "And it came to pass that on a certain day, as he sat teaching, there were also Pharisees and doctors of the law sitting by, that were come out of every town of Galilee and Judea and Jerusalem." (Luke v, 17.) He took advantage of the tense situation caused by their presence to teach them a salutary lesson. A paralytic was lowered into their midst seeking to be cured. All were observing closely to see what He would do and say. It was a golden opportunity to set before these Pharisees and

¹ Cf. Summa I.2ae, 112 1, ad 1 and 2; 3.13.2. corp art. and ad 2.

their satellites His true personality and the nature of His mission. "Son," he said to the sick man, "thy sins are forgiven thee." The effect upon the bystanders was immediate. They were outraged that such blasphemous words should be uttered in their presence, they were speechless with righteous indignation. One thought was in the minds of all: "Who can forgive sin but God alone?" Jesus answered their unspoken words: Yes, the power belongs to God alone, but the Son of Man can also forgive sin because He is himself divine. In proof of this He miraculously cured the paralytic: "*But that you may know that the Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins* (He saith to the sick of the palsy), I say to thee: Arise, take up thy bed and go into thy house." (Luke v, 24.) The multitude glorified God who had given such power to men. (Matt. ix, 8.) The incident is important because it shows Jesus personally remitting the sins of those who approached Him and claiming the right and power to do so.

Having in mind these thoughts, taken cursorily from the Gospels, let us turn again once more to consider John xx, 21 ff: "As the Father hath sent me, I also send you." The mission entrusted to the Word Incarnate is to be continued in the world by the Mystical Christ. Jesus willed that the assurance and consolation which came to the poor penitents through the knowledge that then and there, as He looked upon them, He was washing away their sins, should not be the exclusive privilege of those with whom He came in contact during His earthly life. All men in all ages were to receive that forgiveness through Him living and acting in His Church. He was easily accessible to the repentant; His ministers too would be easily accessible. He possessed the divine power of forgiving sin; they also must exercise that same power in His name. "Receive ye the Holy Ghost," he says, "Whose sins you shall forgive they are forgiven them: and whose sins you shall retain they are retained." Just as God, when He elects an individual for some special work, endows the object of His choice with the necessary dispositions to fulfil it worthily (Summa 3.27.4), so He gives His ministers the power to fulfil the mission entrusted to them: and that mission is primarily the mission of forgiving the sins of men.

In the natural and laudable desire to secure a measure of social security and well-being and in looking to the Church to play her part in guiding the world to social and economic betterment, people must be taught that spiritual and moral rehabilitation is no matter of secondary importance. When men are aware of their obligations to God, they will more readily sacrifice themselves in accepting their duties towards their fellow men and society: "Seek first the kingdom of God" says Our Lord. The beginning of this spiritual rehabilitation is in the removal of sin, the obstacle to peace and union with God. The Church, by exercising the power which breaks down all barriers, gives what is noblest to both God and man: "Glory to God in the highest—and on earth peace to men of good will."

RICHARD J. FOSTER.

THE HOMILIES OF THE ROMAN BREVIARY

VI. THE THREE GREAT CAPPADOCIANS

CHURCH history has linked for ever the names of St. Basil the Great, his young brother St. Gregory of Nyssa and their common friend, but particularly St. Basil's, St. Gregory of Nazianzos. The bond which connected these three great contemporaries is reflected in the common title which tradition has bestowed upon them—"the Three Great Cappadocians". For this reason and because of the smallness of their contribution to the Roman Breviary—only nine passages between the three¹—it will be convenient to consider them together in one article of this series.

The lives, too, of this distinguished triumvirate, the glory of their native Cappadocia, are so intimately interwoven that the salient events in the careers of all three may be fittingly recorded in one common chronicle:

328-329—G. of Nazianzos born at Arianzos, a small village near Nazianzos in Cappadocia. He was born shortly before St. Basil.

329—Basil born at Caesarea in Cappadocia.

c. 335—G. of Nyssa, St. Basil's younger brother, born.

c. 345-350—The three are fellow students at Caesarea; then the two brothers leave for Constantinople and the Nazianzen for Alexandria.

c. 350-355—Basil and G. of Nazianzos again fellow students at Athens. It is not certain whether G. of Nyssa was there also. Julian the Apostate certainly was.

357—Basil, and probably also his brother, baptized at Caesarea; the Nazianzen at Nazianzos.

358-364—Basil head of a monastic community at Annesos on the River Iris. His brother is there also for a time; the Nazianzen intermittently.

361—G. of Nazianzos ordained priest. He retires to Annesos.

362-372—G. of Nazianzos priest at Nazianzos, under his own father who was the bishop.

364—Basil ordained deacon and priest. He too goes back to Annesos.

365-370—Basil priest at Caesarea.

370—Basil Metropolitan of Cappadocia. He was consecrated bishop of Caesarea on 14 June, which is now kept in the Latin Church as his feastday.

371—G. of Nyssa consecrated bishop of Nyssa and

372—G. of Nazianzos bishop of Sassima, which he never even visited, remaining at Nazianzos in an administrative capacity.

375-378—G. of Nyssa banished by the Arians.

379-1 January. Basil dies.

379-381—G. of Nazianzos is transferred to Constantinople as administrator.

381—Second General Council. (First of Constantinople.) Gregory retires to Nazianzos and in

383—to Arianzos.

389—G. of Nazianzos dies. (9 May.)

c. 395—G. of Nyssa dies. (9 March.)

It will be advisable, we think, to add a few supplementary notes to the foregoing list, so as to "place" the three great Doctors in their relation to the history of Dogma, and thus to explain why an article is devoted to them

¹ There are five from St. Basil, four from St. Gregory of Nazianzos and one from St. Gregory of Nyssa; but one of those given under the name of St. Gregory of Nazianzos, namely the homily on the feast of the Holy Trinity, is not considered genuine by modern scholars.

here, in spite of the rarity of the occasions on which their writings are made use of in our Breviary.

First of all, the three Saints stand out in history as the exponents of the traditional faith in fourth-century Asia Minor against the rationalistic innovations of Arianism. Their works contain the fine flower of Catholic dogmatic tradition on the most fundamental of Christian mysteries, such as the co-eternal and co-equal nature of the Three Divine Persons. That tradition was the oral tradition of their Christian forefathers—*παράδοσις ἁγράφος τῶν πατέρων*—which each of them had imbibed in a household of Saints. Basil and Gregory of Nyssa numbered the following Saints among their relatives: their maternal grandfather, a martyr; their paternal grandmother, Macrina the elder; both their parents, Basil the elder and Emmelia; their sister, Macrina the younger, and another of their brothers, Peter, Bishop of Sebaste. Gregory of Nazianzos had for parents the elder St. Gregory, Bishop of Nazianzos and St. Nonna; St. Caesarius, a court physician at Constantinople, was his brother, while St. Amphilochius of Iconium was his first cousin. Their home training, therefore, had fully prepared these illustrious Doctors to expound Christian doctrine with clarity and accuracy as well as with devotion and zeal.

A distinction must be drawn between the active and the literary work of this team of three. As ecclesiastical politicians they proved a failure, but as writers they complemented one another so perfectly that together they succeeded in rooting out Arianism from most parts of Asia Minor. Basil stands out chiefly as the organizer, the ascetical and liturgical writer. Always in poor health and extremely sensitive, his was a very dignified but very lovable character. Gregory of Nazianzos, *the Theologian*, as the Greeks style him, was also a poet and a very gifted orator. Gentle, retiring, ever in dread of responsibility, he also was very sensitive; and yet he achieved great things, especially at Constantinople. Gregory of Nyssa's bent was towards philosophy and mysticism. Wanting in tact and rather rash in action, he appears in history as somewhat of a dreamer and blunderer. But to him, too, Catholic Dogma owes an immense debt, for he is one of the earliest exponents of methodical theology.

How highly their contemporaries, both saints and heretics, thought of them may be inferred from the fact that St. Basil found a very practical admirer in St. Ambrose, who rendered, or adapted, into Latin several of the great Cappadocian's works. St. Jerome proudly avows his indebtedness to St. Gregory of Nazianzos, calling him: *Vir eloquentissimus, praeceptor meus, a quo scripturas explanante didici . . .*¹ Contemporary heretics also felt the power of the three great Doctors. The fanatic Arian, Modestus, praetorian prefect under Valens, once said to Basil: "No one has ever spoken to me with such frankness"—and Basil retorted: "Evidently you have never dealt with a Catholic Bishop." On account of his brave stand against heresy, Gregory of Nyssa was exiled from his see for two years. Finally, there is that delightful remonstrance of the Catholics of Constantinople to the Nazianzen when the harassed Patriarch resigned his office there: "If you go away the Holy Trinity also departs with you."

The few extracts from these three Doctors which appear in the Breviary

¹ *De Viris Illust.*, n. 127.

provide, as we have hinted, too narrow a basis for an adequate assessment of their work as exponents of Catholic Dogma. No one, however, can forget Basil's theological classic on the Holy Ghost, or the powerful sermons of St. Gregory of Nazianzos on various points of dogma, or the profound synthesis—a veritable compendium of Dogmatic Theology—penned by St. Gregory of Nyssa. The poems of the Nazianzen also call for a special mention. They are somewhat prolix and occasionally laboured; but they abound too in happy thoughts couched in choice words. Cardinal Newman has translated a few of them; but it must be admitted that his mastery of the English language has enabled him to improve on the original.

One other consideration, of a historical nature, needs to be added here. It is through the writings of the three Cappadocians, more even than through those of the Alexandrine Fathers, that Origen, of whom the three Doctors were lifelong admirers, has exerted such a deep influence on Catholic Dogma, both in East and West.

The passages from St. Basil read in the Roman Breviary are as follows:

(i) The lessons of the Second Nocturn of *Laetare* Sunday in Lent, where the Saint enlarges to his heart's content on one of his pet subjects, namely the advantages of fasting. (ii) The lessons of the Second Nocturn of the last Sunday of the ecclesiastical year (Fifth of November), with their vivid description of the final judgement. (iii) The homily on his own feastday (June 14). (iv) The lessons of the Second Nocturn on the Fourth Day within the Octave of St. John the Baptist (June 27). (v) The short lesson of the Office of Our Lady on Saturday for the month of November.

Perhaps the most characteristic of the five extracts is the homily on St. Basil's own feastday. It is taken from the *Regulae fusius explicatae* (the more extensive rules—"Ὅροι κατὰ πλάτος") so called to distinguish them from the shorter rules. These two works have exerted an incalculable influence on monastic asceticism, both Eastern and Western. St. Benedict himself in the Epilogue to his Rule¹ refers his monks to them: *Sed et Regula sancti Patris nostri Basilii*. In the passage under consideration St. Basil comments on Luke xiv, 26-35, and explains what is meant by monastic renunciation:²

Est igitur renuntiatio, quemadmodum docuimus, vinculorum terrenae huius ac temporalis vitae solutio atque ab humanis negotiis liberatio, per quam ad ineundam viam, qua ad Deum pervenitur, aptiores et promptiores efficiuntur; et expedita ratio ad acquisitionem usumque rerum quae super aurum et lapidem pretiosum multum longe sunt pretiosiores: et in summa, cordis humani ad coelestem conversationem translatio, ita ut dicere liceat: Nostra conversatio in coelis est; et, quod maximum est, initium unde ad Christi similitudinem evadimus qui cum dives esset, propter nos pauper est factus.

Renunciation, then, as we have taught, is a loosening of the chains which bind us to this earthly and temporary life, and deliverance from human affairs, by which we are rendered more ready and fit to start on the road that leads to God; it is a speedy means for acquiring and using those things which are more valuable than gold and precious stones. In short, it is a lifting up of the human heart to a heavenly tenor of life, so as to be able to say: Our conversation is in heaven. And—greatest of all—it is the beginning of being made conformable to Christ's image, who, being rich, became poor for our sakes.

¹ Ch. 73, *De eo quod non omnis observatio iustitiae in hac sit regula constituta.*

² 14 June, Lesson 9.

Probably the passage from St. Basil best remembered by those who recite the Breviary is that in which he draws a terrifying picture of the final judgement and of the punishment meted out to the wicked. This picture, coming as it does at the end of the liturgical year, leaves us with feelings of horror and wholesome fear. This is, we take it, the reason why the Church has selected it for the Divine Office. St. Basil begins by exhorting those who are tempted to sin to think on

horribile illud et intolerabile Christi tribunal ¹

that dread and awful judgement-seat of Christ,

before which every man

astabit . . . contremiscens. ²

shall stand . . . trembling.

Then he goes on to describe the unhappy state of unrepentant sinners.

These are his words: ³

Mox illis qui multa mala in vita perpetrarint, terribiles quidam et deformes assistant angeli, igneos vultus prae se ferentes, atque ignem spirantes, . . . nocti vultu similes, propter moerorem et odium in humanum genus. Ad haec cogites profundum barathrum, inextricabiles tenebras, ignem carentem splendore, urendi quidem vim habentem, sed privatum lumine; deinde vermium genus venenum immittens et carnem vorans, inexplēbiliter edens, neque unquam saturitatem sentiens, intolerabiles dolores corrosione ipsa infingens.

At once, those who have committed great evil in life will be surrounded by angels of terrible and hideous aspect, of fiery face and scorching breath . . . of appearance like to the night, because of their grief and hatred of mankind. Think, moreover, on that deep abyss, that intense darkness, that fire which though lacking the brightness and the light of fire, has yet the power of burning; add to this the worms breathing out venom and devouring the flesh, ever consuming yet never satiated, inflicting unbearable pain with their gnawing.

It is certainly a fearsome picture! No seventeenth-century practitioner in this *genre*, such as Segneri, could have charged it with more vivid and lurid tints. And yet the Roman Church has chosen it to form part of the canonical Office. The fear of the Lord, as well as the love of God, are indeed the two powerful wings in our ascent to the liberty of His children. The Ritual of the *Velatio Virginum* has condensed this truth in the lapidary phrase *Amore te timeant!*

The following extract on fasting is again rather out of tune with modern ascetical practice: ⁴

Jejunium prophetas genuit, potentes confirmat atque roborat. Jejunium legislatores sapientes facit; animae optima custodia, corporis socius securus, fortibus viris munimentum et arma, athletis et certantibus exercitatio. Hoc praeterea tentationes propulsat, ad pietatem armat, cum sobrietate habitat, temperantiae opifex est; in bellis fortitudinem affert, in pace quietem docet; Nazarenum sanctificat, sacerdotem perficit.

Fasting brought forth prophets; it confirms and strengthens the mighty. Fasting makes rulers wise; it is the surest guardian of the soul, a safe companion for the body, arms and armour for mighty men, training for athletes and wrestlers. Fasting drives away temptations, prepares us for loyal service, is the companion of sobriety, fosters temperance. In war it brings courage, in peace it teaches gentleness: it sanctifies the Nazarene, it makes the priest perfect.

¹ Fifth Sunday of November, Lesson 4.

⁴ Fourth Sunday in Lent, Lessons 5 and 6,

² Ibidem.

³ Ib., and Lesson 5.

The writings of St. Gregory of Nazianzos are represented in the Roman Breviary by three extracts: (i) The lessons of the Second Nocturn on the Octave Day of the Epiphany; (ii) the lessons of the Second Nocturn of the Fifth Sunday of October (now superseded by the Feast of Christ the King); and (iii) the short historical lesson on 1 August, to commemorate the feast of the Macchabees. As has been said, the homily on the feast of the Holy Trinity is not considered genuine, being commonly assigned by modern patristic scholars to a Latin writer, most probably St. Gregory of Elvira, a Spanish author of the fourth century (*d.* after 392).

The first of these extracts is a fair specimen of St. Gregory's preaching, that is, when it is read in the original Greek; the Latin translations, especially of sermons like this where word-play fill an important rôle, do not convey to the ear the rhythm and effortless balance of the original phrasing. The Nazianzen's subject is the Baptism of Christ (*Oratio in Sancta Lumina*), which he introduces as follows:¹

Non possum cohibere laetitiae voluptatem, sed mente extollor et afficior; et propriae pusillitatis oblitus, officium magni Joannis, immo potius famulatum subire contendo ac gestio; et licet non sim praecursor, de eremo tamen venio.

I cannot restrain my transports of joy; my mind is raised on high, I am deeply moved. Forgetful of my own littleness, I long and strive to follow the great John in his office, or rather, service; and, though not, like him, a forerunner, yet I too come from the desert.

Note this allusion to his monastic life. Such personal notes are a feature of the Nazianzen's style.

Another characteristic example of Gregory Nazianzen's method of introducing a subject is to be found in his sermon on Easter, part of which is read in the Second Nocturn of Easter Sunday in the Benedictine Breviary. We ask our readers' indulgence for exceeding on this one occasion our terms of reference. The passage is this:²

Pascha Domini, Pascha, iterumque Pascha, dicam in honorem Trinitatis.

The Lord's Easter, Easter, once more I repeat the word Easter, in honour of the Trinity.

Here, while exhorting his audience to celebrate the greatest of Christian solemnities with due gladness, the Saint creates an occasion for making an open confession on the mystery of the Holy Trinity—a neat way of tacitly rebuking the Arians and Arian sympathizers of those days.

In a subsequent passage of the same sermon the Saint points out the reason for celebrating Christ's solemnities, which is simply this: to re-live Christ's life:³

Heri cum Christo in crucem angebar, hodie simul glorificor; heri commoriebar, hodie simul vivificor; heri consepelebar, hodie simul resurgo. . . .

Yesterday I suffered with Christ on the Cross, today together with Him I am filled with glory. With Him I died yesterday, with Him today I have returned to life. With Him I was yesterday buried, with Him today I have risen. . . .

¹ Octave Day of the Epiphany, Lesson 4.

² Monastic Breviary. Second Nocturn of Easter Sunday, Lesson 5.

³ Ibidem, Lessons 7 and 8.

Simus ut Christus, quoniam Christus quoque sicut nos. Efficiamur dii propter ipsum, quoniam Ipse quoque propter nos homo factus est.

Let us be like Christ, since Christ became like us. Let us become gods for His sake, because He on His part became man for ours.

The lessons of the Saint on the Macchabees,¹ with their eloquent tribute to Eleazar, the seven martyred brothers and their valiant mother are also well worth reading, especially in the Greek. They are certainly well up to the standard of the great poet-orator.

From St. Gregory of Nyssa only one extract has been inserted in the Roman Breviary, where it is to be found in the Second Nocturn of the Wednesday within the Octave of the Ascension. It is interesting for this reason, that it is the only liturgical passage where Psalm xxiii—*Domini est terra et plenitudo ejus*—with its dramatic questions and answers—*Attollite portas, principes, vestras . . . et introibit Rex gloriæ . . . Quis est Iste Rex gloriæ? . . . Dominus virtutum Ipse est Rex gloriæ*—is applied to the mystery of Our Lord's Ascension:²

Hodiernam celebritatem satis per se magnam, propheta David majorem efficit dum illi gaudium e Psalmis adjungit.

Today's festival, solemn enough in itself, is made yet more glorious by the Prophet David when, from the Psalms, he brings to it further joy.

The Psalmist, continues the Saint, joins himself in spirit with the choirs of Angels deputed by God to guard our earth and who now accompany Christ in His triumph. At the gates of heaven an animated dialogue takes place between these Angels and those who stay in Paradise. The doors are finally opened, the heavenly hierarchies come out to welcome the ascending King—³

verum non agnoscunt Eum, qui sordidam vitæ nostræ stolam indutus est; cujus rubra sunt vestimenta ex humanorum malorum torculari. . . . Itaque rursus comites ejus vocibus illis interrogantur: Quis est iste Rex gloriæ? Respondetur autem non amplius, Fortis et potens in praelio; sed, Dominus virtutum, qui mundi principatum obtinuit, qui summam omnia in se collegit, qui pristinum in statum cuncta restituit: Ipse est Rex gloriæ.

but they do not recognize Him, clothed as He is with the mean robe of our mortality; His garments red from the wine-press of human suffering. And so once more they question His companions: Who is this King of glory? But the answer is no longer: One strong and mighty in war; but, The Lord of hosts, He who has gained the empire of the world, who has drawn all things completely to Himself, who has restored all things to their former state: He is the King of glory.

As a conclusion, we add one stanza from the Greek Menæa, written in honour of the Theologian, St. Gregory of Nazianzos, but which can as fittingly be applied to his two friends of Caesarea and of Nyssa: "Hail, river of God, ever full of the waters of grace, and gladdening the whole city

¹ Fifth Sunday of October, Second Nocturn.

² Wednesday after the Ascension, Lesson 4.

³ Ibidem, Lesson 6.

of Christ the King with thy heavenly words and writings; torrent of delight, inexhaustible ocean, faithful and loyal guardian of doctrine, most vigorous defender of the Trinity, organ of the Holy Ghost, intellect ever watchful, harmonious tongue that explainest the profound mysteries of the Scriptures. Pray now to Christ, that He grant His plentiful mercy unto our souls."

ROMANUS RIOS, O.S.B.

NOTES ON RECENT WORK

HOLY SCRIPTURE

IT is now a trifle more than fifteen years since *The Psalms Explained for Priests and Students* appeared under the joint editorship of Frs. C. J. Callan and J. A. McHugh, O.P., both of them professors in the theological faculty of the Catholic Foreign Mission Seminary, Maryknoll, New York.¹ Père J. M. Vosté, O.P., now the Secretary of the Pontifical Biblical Commission, praised the work in his preface for its "clearness of style and presentation, sound information without vain display, and a practical aim, inspired above all by enlightened and apostolic zeal". The work might be compendiously described as an English equivalent of the Belgian canon, Van der Heeren's *Psalmi et Cantica Breviarii explicata*, in which the Latin text of the Vulgate was printed side by side with an excellent paraphrase, though, unlike Van der Heeren's second and later editions, the order followed was that of the Psalter as commonly set out in numerical sequence, not that of the Breviary Psalter.

Now, after the book has completed so many years of useful service to the English-speaking clergy, Fr. Callan has brought out something more than a new edition, since the book has been notably increased in size, and the title also has been substantially lengthened, with some gain in accuracy and exact definition. The style is now: *The Psalms translated from the Latin Psalter, in the light of the Hebrew, of the Septuagint, and Pesbitta Versions, and of the Psalterium juxta Hebraeos of St. Jerome with Introductions, Critical Notes and Spiritual Reflections*.² To appreciate the changes made it is necessary to turn to page 17 of the General Introduction under the heading "The Character of the Present Work", where it is explained that this introduction, together with the special introduction to the individual psalms, has been taken, without substantial variation, from the earlier book, whereas: "The rest of this new book—the translation of the Psalms, the revised and increased notes, the Spiritual Reflections on each psalm, which constitute the bulk of the work—is all quite new and different." This might have been expressed more clearly by saying that there has been a thorough revision and that one section (the reflections on the spiritual meaning of each psalm) is wholly new.

It is quite evident that this edition is a great improvement on that

¹ Wagner, New York, 1929. Pp. viii + 524.

² Wagner, New York, 1944. Pp. vii + 695. Price \$5.

of 1929, and the notice facing page 1 that the book has been "produced in full compliance with all Government regulations" for saving paper need not deter anybody from buying it. The type is now a trifle smaller and the paper is thinner, but, as in the case of many noble books published in this country under war-time regulations, it is a positive gain to have said farewell (we may hope permanently) to the sort of paper which makes a book look much bigger than it really is. As regards the contents it may be claimed that all reasonable help is given to readers who do not wish to be bothered with niceties of Semitic philology, and who desire immediate guidance in reciting the psalms rather than detailed comments on particular verses.¹ One or two criticisms may be offered in the form of queries. First, is it quite certain that the arrangement in numerical order is the best one for the practical purposes of those who recite the Divine Office? Certainly, Van der Heeren has attracted many readers since his conversion to the Breviary order by the fact that his book (which includes the canticles) can be used for the actual recitation of the Office, and is, indeed, supplied with antiphons and versicles for the purpose! Secondly, are the spiritual reflections, admirable as they appear to be, quite so effective as Van der Heeren's far shorter notes on the liturgical occurrences of each psalm? No doubt such liturgical use is often in the nature of an accommodation, but it is delightful to be reminded that the Church employs such and such a psalm in one or more of her festal or ferial settings. It is surprising, too, that no reference is made here, or in other commentaries, to the abundant gleanings on the use of the psalms throughout the Christian centuries that may be found in the late Lord Ernle's *The Psalms in Human Life*.

The need for a really full Old Testament Theology by a Catholic writer in English is one that must sooner or later be met by the production of an original work, or (as a poor second choice) by a translation of some such book as Dr. Paul Heinisch's *Theologie des Alten Testaments*. It is cold comfort to know that non-Catholic scholars in this country are equally dissatisfied with their existing literature of this type, so that so experienced a scholar as Dr. H. Wheeler Robinson was constrained to write in 1937 that: "In regard to the study of O.T. religion in general, there is no outstanding book in English, either of the historical development ('history of religion') or especially of the chief topics of the religion ('theology of the O.T.')." ² Smaller books, he considers, "cannot meet our need for an English work which would be a modernized form of the now antiquated H. Schulz, *Old Testament Theology*", which was itself, it should be noted, a translation from the German. The present time is, admittedly, not a favourable one for the issue of major works, but we are entitled to look for an instalment, at least, of some future sound and important treatise.

¹ Doubtless alternative renderings are often a great waste of the reader's time, but in such a verse as Ps. ci, 7 (*Similis factus sum pellicano solitudinis*), reference might have been made to Professor G. R. Driver's essay on "The Modern Study of the Hebrew Language" in *The People and the Book*, in which he proves (pp. 81-2) pretty conclusively that the *qā'ath* of the Old Testament has none of the characteristics of the pelican and many of the habits of the jackdaw.

² *Expository Times*, Vol. XLVIII (Jan., 1937), p. 152. In an earlier number of the same monthly Dr. Robinson remarked that A. B. Davidson's *Theology of the Old Testament* is "a conglomerate of lecture notes representing different stages of his slow development on critical questions". Vol. XLI (March 1930), p. 247.

In these circumstances we may specially welcome a book by a Wesleyan minister, Mr. Norman H. Snaith, who is tutor in Old Testament languages and literature at Wesley College, Headingley, Leeds. In addition to being the author of some earlier works, he contributed the article "The Religion of the Old Testament: Worship" to the symposium *Record and Revelation*, and "Priesthood and Temple" to Dr. T. W. Manson's *A Companion to the Bible*.¹ His latest book is entitled *The Distinctive Ideas of the Old Testament*,² and is marked by his habitually wide and thorough knowledge of the Semitic languages. It is a small book, not to be compared, if size were the sole criterion, with the larger, more complete works by Schulz or Davidson or König or Eichrodt. A good part of it is taken up with philological discussions, which are not to everybody's taste, and its scope is restricted in so far as it is mainly concerned with the nature and attributes of God as revealed in the Old Testament. It analyses with much erudition certain fundamental words such as *qodesh*, *cherem* and *chol* in the chapter on the "Holiness of God", *tsedaqah* (righteousness) apropos of God's righteousness, *go'el* and *tsedeq* ("The Salvation of God"), *chesed* ("The Covenant Love of God"), *'abeb* ("The Election-Love of God"), and *ruach* ("The Spirit of God"). The first chapter, largely a discussion of method, contains some admirable remarks on the late Sir James Frazer's "general assumption of similarity of development" in customs and ideas through the world as a whole. The least satisfactory chapter is the last, where an attempt is made to justify the Lutheran doctrine of justification by faith alone. Mr. Snaith appears to know very little of Catholic theology in its bearing on this topic. He might be recommended to study carefully the article "Justification" in the eighth volume of the *Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique*.

Exegesis, whether within or outside the Church of Christ, has so long and complicated a history that any good book on the subject is an event. In *The Interpretation of the Bible*, edited by the Rev. C. W. Dugmore,³ six well-known authorities have given leave for the printing of their lectures, originally delivered in Christ's Chapel of Alleen's "College of God's Gift" at Dulwich during the autumn term of 1943. Mr. H. J. Carpenter, the Warden of Keble College, Oxford, deals with the Bible in the Early Church, Fr. Conrad Pepler, O.P., draws extensively on Miss Beryl Smalley's *The Study of the Bible in the Middle Ages* for a stimulating paper on "The Faith of the Middle Ages", Mr. Albert Peel considers the Protestant views on the Bible's authority, and Professor R. H. Lightfoot outlines the critical approach to the Bible in the nineteenth century. All these are useful and competent pieces of work, but the last two lectures are by far the most original and striking. Dr. T. W. Manson, author of that remarkable book *The Teaching of Jesus*,⁴ writes scathingly on the failure of Liberalism to interpret the Bible as the Word of God, and its fixed dogmas, of which the two principal are "the steel-and-concrete order of Nature, and the impossibility of special revelations" (p. 98). He is convinced that "we

¹ See THE CLERGY REVIEW, Vol. XX, pp. 246-8.

² The Epworth Press, 1944. Pp. 194. Price 10s. net.

³ Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, London, 1944. Pp. ix + 125. Price 6s. net.

⁴ See THE CLERGY REVIEW, Vol. VI, pp. 148-9.

must retrace our steps to the point where Liberalism went off the track" and that "the mischief was begun when the working hypotheses of natural science were allowed to become the dogmas of theology" (p. 101). This is to restate with a slight difference of emphasis a notable sentence of Père Lagrange: "Il semble que vraiment la critique protestante des évangiles soit allée au bout de ses errements, et qu'il ne lui reste plus qu'à revenir non pas à son point de départ, mais au point où l'Église, animée d'un sage esprit de progrès, l'attend."¹ Dr. John Lowe, Dean of Christ Church, Oxford, pleads for the recovery of the theological interpretation of the Bible. In default of such interpretation there is much that is reminiscent of A. C. Benson's typical (Anglican) preacher, who, after remarking that the scene in the gospels is so well known to need any description, then proceeds to paint an ugly picture of it with the help of *The Historical Geography of the Holy Land* and *The Land and the Book*, and concludes with a few moral reflections, not always in close connection with the rest of the discourse.

There have been many guides to Jerusalem, and the Holy Land in general, but few can have been more attractively written or illustrated than *We Saw the Holy City*, the record of a Wesleyan chaplain's years in Palestine.² The Rev. Leslie Farmer, without making any claim to special knowledge, has managed to discover the truth about most, if not all, of the great sanctuaries (he has, for example, an excellent defence of the Holy Sepulchre's titles to authenticity), and to avoid such places as the so-called "Garden Tomb", at least in so far as its custodians make a pretence (there is no other word for it!), that it is anything more than an interesting old tomb. "In a recent book," he writes on page 149, "by a famous Methodist preacher who visited the Holy Land the view is expressed that the Garden Tomb is authentic. I do not think so, and I say why in the pages that follow." But this pleasant book is very much more than an account of disputes regarding authenticity, and the author, with transparent sincerity and kindness, takes pains to say nice things about all the various religious bodies in Jerusalem as it is today. All Catholics who are interested in the Bible and its literature will value the remarks about the magnificent scriptural library of the Dominican Fathers of St. Étienne. The bibliography does not, curiously enough, mention the work of one of these Fathers, the excellent section in the *Guide Bleu* to Syria and Palestine by Père F. M. Abel, O.P.

JOHN M. T. BARTON.

¹ *Évangile selon S. Marc.*, 4th (1929) edition, p. lvii.

² Epworth Press, London, 1944, Pp. 272. Price 12s. 6d. net.

Ne lucra saeculi in Christi quaeras militia. . . . Sit beres, sed mater filiorum, id est gregis sui, ecclesia, quae illos genuit, nutrit et pavit. Quid nos inserimus inter matrem et liberos? Gloria episcopi est pauperum opibus providere, ignominia omnium sacerdotum est propriis studere divitiis. (St. Jerome, Ep. LII.)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

BENEDICTIO MULIERIS PRAEGRANTIS

The opinion was given, *THE CLERGY REVIEW*, 1942, XXII, p. 561, that since childbirth was always accompanied by some danger, this blessing of the Ritual could be given in all cases. What then is the force of the indult obtained by some Ordinaries permitting the blessing to be given in all cases? (W.)

REPLY

S.R.C., 24 February, 1928, in *Westminster Ordo*, 1945, p. 110: Franciscus Cardinalis Bourne, Archiepiscopus Westmonasterien. ad pedes Sanctitatis Vestrae provolutus, humiliter exponit quod vigendo nostris diebus tantopere opiniones anticonceptionistae, opportunum necnon necessarium videtur adiuvare et munire uxores catholicas subsidiis spiritualibus ut generoso animo onera matrimonii ferant: ideoque humilis Orator petit ut *Benedictio mulieris praegrantis* quae in Rituali Romano nonnisi in periculo partus datur, possit impertiri in omni casu praegnationis. Et Deus, etc. . .

Sacra Rituum Congregatio, vigore facultatum sibi specialiter a Sanctissimo Domino nostro Pio Papa XI tributarum, attentis expositis peculiariibus adiunctis, benigne annuit pro gratia iuxta petita, servata formula Ritualis Romani in casu. Contrariis non obstantibus quibuscumque.

A. CARD. VICO,

Ep. Portuen. Praefus.

Die 24 Februarii 1928.

The force of this indult may be seen by comparing the phrase "in periculis partus", which is the sub-title of the blessing in the *Ritualet Romanum*, Appendix, n. 44, with the phrase "in omni casu praegnationis" contained in the indult. It is our view, following the common teaching of the writers, that the blessing may be given without an indult on every occasion of childbirth, even though it is perfectly normal and unattended by any special risks, for example, those due to an abnormal condition of the mother's health. This view is amply confirmed by the words of the rite itself.

Pregnancy (in omni casu praegnationis) is clearly something distinct from childbirth, in the ordinary use of language. It is a habitual condition spreading over several months, whereas childbirth or the act of parturition is at most a matter of a few hours. The indult permits the blessing to be given to any woman who is pregnant, whereas the blessing in the ritual is restricted to the time of childbirth. If the petition read, in its closing words, "in omni casu partus", the indult would be an argument against the view we have maintained that no special danger is required. As it stands it offers no difficulty at all, in our view. Those who enjoy the indult may give this blessing, which the Ritual employs for the time of childbirth, to pregnant mothers at any time, and there is nothing in the wording of the rite which is inconsistent with it being given to such.

If the indult is not enjoyed, it is quite clear that the blessing may not

be given except in childbirth, i.e. to a woman in labour, which may be widely interpreted to include the time when the birth is expected. One would not criticize an even wider interpretation of the time, anticipating it by a few days, since what the authors conveniently call a "moral" time reckoning is often applied to things of this kind.

BAPTISM OF ADOPTED CHILD

In this district the foster parents of an adopted child are on trial for six months, until the authorities are satisfied that the child is in suitable surroundings. If, in a given case, there is every reason for supposing that, at the conclusion of six months' trial, the adoption will become permanent, should the child be baptized at once? (R.)

REPLY

Canon 750, §2: *Extra mortis periculum, dummodo catholicae eius educationi cautum sit, licite baptizatur:*

1. Si parentes vel tutores, aut saltem unus eorum, consentiant;
2. Si parentes, id est pater, mater, avus, avia, vel tutores desint, aut ius in eum amiserint, vel illud exercere nullo pacto queant.

Canon 770: *Infantes quamprimum baptizentur; et parochi ac concionatores frequenter fideles de hac gravi eorum obligatione commoneant.*

(i) Where there is no reason for supposing that, at the end of six months, the child will be withdrawn from its adopting parents and educated as a non-Catholic, it seems to us that it should be assumed that the adopting parents will remain permanently such; the child should then be baptized as soon as possible, exactly like any other infant. There is, perhaps, some slight risk that it may be withdrawn from their care at the end of six months and educated as a non-Catholic. But there is often some possibility of this happening even to the natural and legitimate offspring of Catholic parents, and the risk must be taken, since every infant has a right to baptism. The canonical status of a child, born of non-Catholics, baptized a Catholic and thereafter brought up in heresy or schism, is provided for in such canons as 1099, §2.

(ii) If, on the other hand, there is some reason for supposing that the adoption will not become permanent, we think that the baptism should be deferred for six months until the clause of canon 750, §2, "*dummodo cautum sit etc.*", is verified. Should a child, however, in these circumstances, be in danger of death, it ought to be baptized at once in accordance with the direction of canon 750, §1: "*Infans infidelium, etiam invitis parentibus, licite baptizatur, cum in eo versatur discrimine, ut prudenter praevideatur moriturus, antequam usum rationis attingat.*"

REQUIEM MASS FORMULA

A priest who is administering two parishes and celebrating in each place on All Souls' Day would like to know whether he should use the first formula for the second celebration? (W.)

REPLY

S.R.C., 3 March, 1936, ad. XI; *Ephemerides Liturgicae*, Jus et Praxis, 1937, p. 132: Sacerdos administrat duas ecclesias. In die Commemorationis Omnium Fidelium defunctorum in utraque ecclesia celebrat Missam. Debetne idem sacerdos in illis duabus ecclesiis Missam canere iuxta primum formulare e tribus Missis pro die Commemorationis Omnium fidelium defunctorum, an in una ecclesia iuxta primum et in altera iuxta secundum formulare? *Resp.* Affirmative ad primam partem, Negative ad secundam.

RECEPTION OF CONVERTS INVALIDLY MARRIED

Prospective converts, owing to their lack of religious education, occasionally have a tangled matrimonial history: they have been married, civilly divorced and again "married" civilly. What should be the priest's attitude in such cases? (M.)

REPLY

A complete reply to this question would involve a large portion of the marriage treatise and is clearly impossible. We can, however, indicate the chief points or headings which the priest should have in mind, in cases where the existing "marriage" of prospective converts is apparently invalid owing to a previous marriage.

(i) In principle, his first care should be to re-establish the conjugal relations of the first marriage, if this is at all possible. Even when the first marriage is invalid, he should explore the possibility of revalidating it. Cf. *S.C. Sacram.*, 15 August, 1936, art. 39, c., and art. 65.

(ii) Usually, in the case of persons civilly divorced, the first marriage is irremediably wrecked. Assuming it to be valid, the enquiry should first turn on discovering whether one or both parties to this first marriage are unbaptized. If both are unbaptized the Pauline Privilege may be used, and if only one party is baptized it is possible to obtain a papal dissolution since the marriage, though valid, is not *ratum*. Cf. *THE CLERGY REVIEW*, 1940, XVIII, p. 263. In both cases, having established a *prima facie* case, either for the Pauline Privilege or for papal dissolution, the matter must be sent to the diocesan curia.

(iii) If both parties to this first marriage are baptized and have consummated the marriage, the only possibility of securing their freedom to contract a fresh marriage is by proving that the first marriage was invalidly contracted. In canon 1990 certain diriment impediments are listed, and the marriages affected by them can be declared invalid by a summary and very simple judicial process. It must be remembered that, no matter how certain the invalidity appears to be, the Ordinary's intervention is always necessary before the parties are free to contract a fresh marriage. Cf. *THE CLERGY REVIEW*, 1942, XXII, p. 558.

For causes of nullity other than those listed in canon 1990, for example,

defective consent, two decisions of a competent collegiate tribunal are necessary. The process, even as clarified by *S.C. Sacram.*, 15 August, 1936, is long and troublesome, and it is useless to submit the matter to the Ordinary unless there is a strong *prima facie* case with adequate proofs.

(iv) Finally, if it transpires after every investigation that the first marriage is *ratum et consummatum*, the parties to the existing "marriage" must regard the second union as no marriage at all. If they are prepared to do this, and to live accordingly, there is no reason why they should not be reconciled to the Church exactly like any other converts without matrimonial entanglements.

MARRIAGE—PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATION

What are the duties of a priest investigating a marriage when he discovers that one or both of the parties intend to practise contraception? (X.)

REPLY

S.C. Sacram., 29 June, 1941, n. 9: Non desunt enim alicubi, praesertim in magnis urbibus, qui, spreta canonica lege, nuptias inire praesumant adiecta aliqua conditione aut intentione, connubii sive suspensiva sive irritativa, quae effugium suppeditare queat ad iugum postea excutiendum, novas nuptias conciliandi causa . . .

Nupturientes autem omni studio conetur parochus, si casus intersit, avertere ab expositis intentionibus et conditionibus matrimonio adiiciendis eosque inducere ad retractandas forte iam adiectas.

Alleg. I, n. 16: Si nupturiens declaraverit intentiones aut condiciones huiusmodi se adiecisse aut velle adiacere nuptiis ineundis, ad has retrahendas omni studio eum inducat parochus; quod si ille renuat, eum ab ineundo coniugio dimittat. Si contra recedat, mutatae voluntatis declarationem signet in actis. Tum postulet utrum noverit de conditione aut intentione aliqua id genus et quamam forte apposita aut apponenda ab altera parte, et, casu affirmativo, eadem servet cum hac altera parte.

This Instruction from the *Congregation of the Sacraments* was summarized in *THE CLERGY REVIEW*, 1941, XXI, p. 199. The Ordinary is recommended to make local regulations in the sense outlined in the two above extracts, if he judges it to be expedient, in which case every priest investigating marriages will have to put the questions as directed by the Ordinary.

In places where the Ordinary has not seen fit to do so, the Instruction provides, nevertheless, authoritative guidance for the priest, whenever he detects a condition or intention contrary to the substance of the marriage contract.

Intentions and conditions which interfere with the primary purpose of marriage, the procreation of children, do not necessarily invalidate the contract unless the *right* to normal marital relations is withheld, and it is often most difficult to decide whether this is so in a given case. Cf. *THE CLERGY REVIEW*, 1937, XIII, p. 121, where the matter is fully examined.

There is at least the possibility in all such cases that the marriage consent will be invalid owing to an intention *contra bonum prolis*. The investigating priest will then, in our opinion, be well advised to adopt the suggestion in *Alleg. I*, n. 16, and require the parties to give a written assurance, even though he has received no express directions to this effect from the Ordinary. For he is bound to do what is possible to secure a valid marriage consent from the parties, and the suggestions contained in the Instruction are most apt for this purpose.

PROPER BISHOP FOR ORDINATION

A tonsured cleric studying in diocese X is, by reception of the tonsure, incardinated in diocese Y. He has origin and domicile in X but has not yet even visited diocese Y. Who is the proper bishop for his promotion to minor orders? (A.)

REPLY

Canon 956: *Episcopus proprius, quod attinet ad ordinationem saecularium, est tantum Episcopus dioecesis in qua promovendus habeat domicilium una cum origine aut simplex domicilium sine origine; sed in hoc altero casu promovendus debet animum in dioecesi perpetuo manendi iure iurando firmare, nisi agatur de promovendo ad ordines clerico qui dioecesi per primam tonsuram iam incardinatus est. . . .*

Code Commission, 24 July, 1939, ad. II; *THE CLERGY REVIEW*, 1939, XVII, p. 460: An *Episcopus dioecesis*, in cuius servitium laicus ad primam tonsuram a proprio *Episcopo* promotus fuerit, illi iure proprio et exclusivo ordines conferre aut litteras dimissorias dare valeat ad normam canonis 955, §1, licet ipse in eadem dioecesi domicilium nondum acquisiverit? *Resp.* Affirmative.

The reply of the Code Commission made public, though not in identical terms, a reply given privately to the Bishop of Santa Fé, 7 December, 1931. There had been much doubt on the point owing to the clear definition of "*Episcopus proprius*" in canon 956, and because the notions of "incardination" and "*Episcopus proprius*" are not exactly the same. Cappello, writing in *Periodica*, 1931, XX, p. 128, gave the interpretation which is now, from the reply of the Code Commission, the only tenable one, and which was also the pre-Code law from *S.C. Conc.*, 20 July, 1898, and 24 November, 1906.¹

RECONCILIATION WITH THE CHURCH IN DANGER OF DEATH

What is the procedure to be followed by a priest when called to a non-Catholic who is in danger of death and wishes to become a Catholic? (F. R.)

¹*Fontes*, nn. 4307 and 4330.

REPLY

Instruction from Cardinal Vaughan, 8 May, 1902: . . . ab episcopis unanimes, in recenti suo Conventu, decisum est ut convertendorum Ecclesiae reconciliationem unusquisque Episcopus in propria sua dioecesi sibi reservaret. Quapropter, decisioni supradictae obtemperantes, praescribimus ut, quandocunque convertendus aliquis, exceptis iis qui in mortis articulo constituentur, Ecclesiae reconciliandus sit, facultas ad hoc a Nobis in scriptis petatur. . . .

Before 1902 it appears to have been the custom for priests to receive converts without any application to the local Ordinary, either because priests enjoyed delegated faculties habitually or because it was considered that the censure was not certainly incurred. Cf. THE CLERGY REVIEW, 1933, V, p. 321. In abolishing this practice the bishops in 1902 declared this case to be reserved. We are all, however, familiar with the rule by which every reservation ceases in danger of death, and the Cardinal expressly refers to it in his Instruction printed on p. 21 of the Westminster Synod, 1902, XLI; other bishops issued some equivalent Instruction for their own priests, and, even though no express reference is made to receiving converts in danger of death, it is certain that the reservation then ceases.

The priest who is called to a case of this kind will, according to the time at his disposal, instruct the candidate, administer conditional baptism unless the baptism received from a non-Catholic minister is deemed to be certainly valid, and in general observe the directions given in the *Ordo Administrandi*, as far as this is possible. The person being now a Catholic should receive the last rites as administered to all Catholics. Afterwards the Ordinary must be informed and the usual signed declaration enclosed.

In the above Instruction the phrase "in articulo mortis" is used, but it appears to have, in this context, a meaning identical with "in periculo mortis", and is so interpreted by the Synodal Decrees of Middlesbrough (1933), n. 98.

Officii tui est visitare languentes, nosse domos, matronas ac liberos earum, et nobilium virorum non ignorare secreta. Officii ergo tui sit non solum oculos castos servare, sed et linguam. Numquam de formis mulierum disputes nec alia domus, quid agatur in alia, per te noverit. . . . Nos, quibus animarum medicina commissa est, omnium Christianorum domus debemus amare quasi proprias. Consolutores potius nos in maeroribus suis quam convivas in prosperis noverint. Facile contemnitur clericus, qui saepe vocatus ad prandium non recusat. Numquam petentes, raro accipiamus rogati. (St. Jerome, Ep. LII.)

ROMAN DOCUMENTS

CENTENARY OF THE APOSTLESHIP OF PRAYER

EPISTULA APOSTOLICA

AD REVĀM P. NORBERTUM DE BOYNES, SOCIETATIS IESU VICARIUM GENERALEM
NECNON SODALITATIS A PRECATIONIS APOSTOLATU MODERATOREM:
SAECULO EXEUNTE AB EIUSDEM SODALITATIS CONSTITUTIONE (A.A.S.,
1944, xxxvi, p. 238).

PIUS PP. XII

Dilecte Fili, salutem et Apostolicam Benedictionem.—Cum proxime exeat saeculum, ex quo non sine providentis Dei consilio pia sodalitas, quae a Precationis Apostolatu nuncupatur, feliciter constituta fuit, Nos, dum undique dolores rerumque angustiae premunt, ex uberum illorum fructuum recordatione, quos per diuturnum hoc temporis spatium haec societas opitulante Numine edidit, summum haurimus solacium. Quamobrem cum tibi, qui huic bene merenti consociationi praees, tum iis omnibus, imprimisque Societatis Iesu sodalibus, qui eidem augendae provehendaeque dant operam, paterno gratulamur animo, optamusque non praeteriri huius faustitatis eventum, quin debitis illam honestemus laudibus, itemque ad pia impensaque voluntate eam participandam christifideles adhortemur omnes.

Quam arcte hoc institutum cum Ecclesiae profectu animorumque bono cohaereat, facile intellectu est. Etenim si precatio communiter habita, quae "sicut oportet"¹ fiat, satius nobis Dei clementiam bonitatemque conciliat ex ipsius Iesu Christi pollicitatione dicentis: "Si duo ex vobis consenserint super terram, de omni re quamcumque petierint, fiet illis a Patre meo, qui in caelis est"²; quanto magis apud aeterni Numinis solium ea valere dicenda est, quam non duo solummoda fundant, sed ad bene multa fere ubique terrarum centena milia christiani peculiari ratione caritatisque vinculo copulati. Idque eo vel magis quod per laudabilem eiusmodi soldalitem cum adsiduis sociorum precibus placamina quoque ac piacula coniunguntur; quod insontes pueri, quorum animi candor divinam facilius commovet misericordiam, in hoc impetrationis placationisque inceptum frequentissimi adsciscuntur; quod denique Deiparae Virginis patrocinium hac de causa praesentissimum interponitur, ac communes hae supplicationes expiationesque precibus illis ac piamentibus coagmentantur, quibus Sacratissimum Cor Iesu, semet ipsum in Augusto altaris Sacramento offerens, aeternum Patrem interpellat pro nobis. Quod enim huius societatis sodales veluti peculiare sibi inditum propositum habent hoc est: ut nempe pro Ecclesiae necessitatibus enixe deprecantur, iisdemque omni ope satisfaciant; atque adeo hac de causa Deo cotidie preces, actus, aerumnas pio deferentes animo, universam vitam cuiusque suam in impetrationem ac piamentum convertant. Quin immo dum haec omnia—Divini Iesu Christi Cordis deprecationibus,

¹ Rom. viii, 26.

² Matth. xviii, 19.

quibus adiunguntur, in immensum adaucta—per Immaculatum Mariae Virginis Cor misericordiarum Patri praebeant, ad Regnum Dei latius constituendum amplificandumque non parum pro facultate conferunt. Cum igitur non ad unum dumtaxat vel alterum Ecclesiae emolumentum ac profectum haec sodalitas respiciat, sed ad Dei gloriam hominumque salutem pro viribus procurandam, cumque illa Dominicae Precationis verba “Adveniat Regnum tuum” veluti tesseram sibi propriam habeat, idcirco a ceteris omnibus piis consociatibus, quibus fecunda Iesu Christi Sponsa exornatur, clare discernitur, luculenteque distinguitur. Ut vero innumerus hic comprecantium exercitus supernas vires supernaque arma sua ne distrahat, sed in unum convertat, duplex singulis mensibus supplicandi ratio ac mens universis sociis proponitur, quam ipse Romanus Pontifex recognoscit, comprobatur, ac caelesti benedictione auget: altera scilicet mens ac ratio generalis est; altera autem ad sacras spectat missionum expeditiones fovendas promovendasque.

At putandum non est laudabilem hanc societatem universae tantummodo Ecclesiae bono prospicere; quandoquidem, ut Decessor Noster imm. rec. Pius XI asseverat, singulis etiam sodalibus “continentes uberesque ab initiis suis fructus protulit spiritualis boni”.¹ Etenim consociatos omnes ad assiduam precationis usum excitat ac permovet secundum illud: “Oportet semper orare et non deficere.”² Ac praeterea, quandoquidem nostris hisce temporibus illud fallaciae plenum commentum, quod “naturalismum” vocant, omnia pervadere conatur, ac per “haeresim actionis”, ut aiunt, vel in ipsas spiritualis vitae et apostolicae navitatis irrepere contendit, non sine summa opportunitate utilitateque per pium hoc institutum vestrum christifideles ad illud revocantur doctrinae caput, quo edocemur “neque qui plantat esse aliquid, neque qui rigat; sed, qui incrementum dat, Deum”.³

Huc accedit quod sodalitates vestrae ad solidam verique nominis pietatem suos asseclas instituit ac dirigit. Eis enim suadet ut pia semper mentis intentione omnia cuiusque sua ad Deum erigant ac dirigant, quod quidem recti omnes sacrae disciplinae magistri praeclarissimum ducunt ac praecipuum spiritualis perfectionis adiumentum. Eosque adhortatur universos ut, quae pietatis exercitia minus probata sint devitantes, cultum Sacratissimi Cordis Iesu promoveant, in quo “totius religionis summa atque adeo perfectioris vitae continetur”;⁴ itemque ut Augustum colant Eucharistiae Sacramentum, quod “tamquam centrum existimandum est, in quo christiana vita, quanta usquam est, insistit”;⁵ ac denique ut Deiparam Virginem, eiusque Immaculatum Cor, quod “vas insigne devotionis”⁶ est, revereantur impenseque diligant. Nec deest in instituto hoc vestro flagrantis caritatis studium erga Romanum Pontificem, cui quidem quanto quis arctius adhaeserit, tanto erit ab omni periculo tutior.

Cum vero multiformis sit gratia Dei,⁷ valde opportune societas ista ita conformata est, ut non eadem ab omnibus sodalibus postulet atque exigat, sed eos in gradus, seu ordines, dispertiens, variae animorum generositati facultatique se accomodet; atque adeo eis, “qui prae ceteris pietati

¹ Litt. Apost. *Apostolatus orationis*, d. d. vi Aug., a. MDCCCXXXII.

² Luc. 18, 1.

³ Cf. I Cor. iii, 7.

⁴ Litt. Enc. *Miserentissimus Redemptor*: A.A.S., xx, p. 167.

⁵ *Acta Leonis XIII*, p. 130: Litt. Enc. *Mirae caritatis*.

⁶ Litan. Lauret.

⁷ Cf. I Peter iv, 10.

dediti, singulari flagrant animarum studio, ideoque zelatores et zelatrices dicuntur", ¹ altioris perfectionis viam commendat, ad eamque volenti animo ingrediendam eos alliciti suaviterque compellat.

Ex iis, quae adhuc, presse breviterque attingendo, diximus, facile cernere est, Dilecte Fili, quantopere haec pia societas conferat ad "Actionem Catholicam" ad ceterasque consociationes, quae adiutricem in Ecclesiae apostolatu navant operam, provehendas efficiendasque cotidie magis frugiferas. Etenim, praeterquam quod exploratum est sine divino auxilio —quod per instantem assiduamque precationem ad Deum admotam nobis esse comparandum nos admonet—incassum laborare homines, illud quoque animadvertendum est institutum hoc vestrum interiorem illam alere ac refovere item, qua Deo continenter coniungamur, quaeque veluti supernus sit afflatus veracis validique apostolatus; ac praeterea, cum singulis mensibus peculiare Ecclesiae necessitates ante omnium sodalium oculos ponat, eosque excitet, ut iisdem satisfaciendis supplices Deo preces ac piacula offerant, idcirco procul dubio sociorum animos ad apostolicum studium permovet, et ad rectam eosdem id genus navitatem comparat, conformat, instruit. Quin immo, cum suos etiam cotidianos labores doloresque pro Ecclesiae necessitatibus aeterno Numini eos deferre iubeat, totius eorum vitae cursum non modo in impetrationem expiationemque convertit, sed in eiusmodi etiam apostolatus opera, quae cuilibet volenti facile pateant. Qua in re commentarii illi magna Nobis laude digni videntur, qui "Nuntius Cordis Iesu" inscribuntur, quique linguis amplius quadraginta editi, tam bene de Ecclesia merentur.

Sed in hac potissimum tempestate, dum odio simultateque seiuncti, acerrime inter se digladiantur populi, peculiari sane opportunitate pollet, peculiaremque vim habet pia ista societas ad animorum conciliandam firmandamque coniunctionem. Ex caritate enim orta, et ad caritem fovendam animorumque salutem procurandam ordinata, sodalium mentes, ex quavis gente, stirpe ac sermone sint, ad idem apostolicum propositum, eadem communi prece exsequendum efficiendumque, allicit atque compellit. Ac praeterea quibus coalescit comprecantium agmina singulari quadam ratione cum Iesu Christi Vicario artissime coniungit, non modo quod, ut supra diximus, ad eius mentem singulis mensibus datam, fundunt preces, sed quod etiam, inde ab initio eiusmodi instituto, eius consueverunt socii "spirituales thesauros", qui dicuntur, colligere ac pro Summo Ecclesiae Pastore Deo offerre. Hisce autem postremis temporibus, cum Communis Patris aerumnae atque angustiae ingravescerent, id laudabili consilio inductum est, quod Nobis est sane gratissimum, ut cotidie nempe in universo terrarum orbe Eucharistica Sacrificia, auspice sodalitate vestra, ad mentem Nostram celebrarentur; qua quidem in re cernere libet praeae aetatis christianorum morem reviviscere, qui perseverantes erant in precatione sancta pro primo Christi Vicario: "Oratio autem fiebat sine intermissione ab Ecclesia ad Deum pro eo."²

Sed fraterna haec animorum coniunctio, qua sodales inter se copulantur, in eum consummatur, qui est "Rex et centrum omnium cordium",³ in divinissimum videlicet Cor Iesu, cui iidem se consecrant, ex quo vitam

¹ Statuta Apostolatus orationis, art. VI.

² Acts xii, 5.

³ Litan. Sacratissimi Cordis Iesu.

et apostolicam vim hauriunt, quod peculiari modo venerantur, et cuius communione invicem coagmentati, suas preces et piamenta Deo offerunt.

Cum tam uberes sint salutis fructus, quos haec societas per annorum decursum feliciter edidit, cumque vel uberiores cotidie felicioresque expectentur, haud mirum est si Decessores Nostri summis eam laudibus exornarunt; ac Nosmet ipsi, qui inde ab inito Pontificatu, quotiescumque opportunitas data est, eidem benevolentiam Nostram ultro patfecimus, haud ita multo ante in Encyclicis Litteris "Mystici Corporis Christi" eandem summopere commendare voluimus "utpote Deo gratissimam".¹ Magno autem cum animi solacio ac gaudio cernimus haec comprecantium agmina fere omnes terrarum orbis partes pervasisse, ubicumque christiana fides fulgeat, christianaque caritas operetur; et in Dioeceses MCCC circiter inque paene innumeras paroecias, Episcopis iuvantibus ceteroque clero, fuisse invecta. Siquidem institutum hoc vestrum non modo in Europae et Americae regionibus viget, sed in Africanis etiam, in Asianis et in Oceanicis terris, ac vel in glacialibus illis plagis, quibus recens illuxit evangelicae lucis iubar; itemque non modo in religiosis domibus, in sacris Seminariis, in collegiis et ephebeis viret atque efflorescit, sed in Officiis etiam, in militum stationibus, in valetudinariis, ac vel in ipsis carceribus publicaeque custodiae locis. Ita quidem ut pacifica haec precantium acies trecenties et quinquagies centena milia consociatorum in suis ordinibus recenseat.

Nec minore cum solacio cernimus, praeter Societatem Iesu—in cuius sinu haec sodalitas orta atque enutrita est et in maiorem usque ubertatem constanter laudabiliterque increbrescit—sacrorum Antistites plurimosque ex utroque clero sacerdotes volentibus animis foederatisque viribus in pia hac consociatione, pro sua cuiusque parte, augenda, iuvanda, moderandaque solleter elaborare.

Pergite igitur, dilecti Filii, quotquot piam hanc participatis societatem, per iter auspicato inceptum studiose cotidie magis progredi; pergite hoc institutum—quo ex sententia Decessoris Nostri fel. rec. Pii X, "nihil utilius" est "ad haec tanta et tam varia sananda mala, quibus humani generis societas est affecta"²—pro viribus fovere et usque quaque propagare; pergite ea omnia alacri impensaue navitate adhibere, quae ad Sacratissimi Cordis Iesu Regnum augendum amplificandumque valeant.

Nos cupimus vehementer ominamurque a Deo ut hic paene innumerus supplicantium exercitus non tantum militum numero succrescat, sed superna etiam virtute supernoque vigore adaugeatur; utque incenso illo impetrationis expiationisque studio affletur ac vigescat, quod totam sodalium vitam eorumque cogitationes, proposita ac vota permoveat, ita quidem ut iidem "non amplius petitores, sed petitiones"³ sint; illo dicimus impetrationis expiationisque ardore, quo—ut per proximum Decembrem mensem ad mentem Nostram iam nobis ex more patefactam deprecaturi estis—christianos omnes oportet magis in dies magisque imbui.

Quae ut feliciter, adspirante Deo, eveniant, efficiat Apostolica Benedictio, quam caelestium gratiarum auspicem, paternaeque benevolentiae Nostrae testem, cum tibi, dilecte Fili, tum piae huius consociationis modera-

¹ *A.A.S.*, xxxv, p. 246.

² Epist. ad R. P. Iosephum Boubée: *A.A.S.*, iii, p. 345.

³ Cf. GREGOR. MAGN., *In I Reg.*, XII, 2: MIGNE, *PL.*, LXXIX, 338.

toribus, fautoribus ac sodalibus singulis universis effuso animo impertimus.

Datum Romae, apud Sanctum Petrum, die xvi mensis Iunii, in festo Sacratissimi Cordis Iesu, anno MDCCCXXXIV, Pontificatus Nostri sexto.

PIUS PP. XII

CANONIZATION OF BLESSED NICHOLAS OF FLÜE

(ii) SACRA CONGREGATIO RITUUM CURIEN

CANONIZATIONIS B. NICOLAE DE FLÜE, CONFESSORIS, EREMITAE HELVETII
(A.A.S., XXXVI, 1944, p. 219.)

SUPER DUBIO

*An et de quibus miraculis constet, post indultam Eidem Beato ab Apostolica Sede
venerationem, in casu et ad effectum de quo agitur.*

Sicut exaltantur caeli a terra, sic exaltatae sunt viae meae a viis vestris, et cogitationes meae a cogitationibus vestris, dicit Dominus (Is. lv, 9). Obstupescit animus mirabilem B. Nicolae de Flüe vitam perpendendo, qui, adulescens, miles, pater familias, rei publicae curator, insignia virtutum specimina praebeuit. At quam maxime admirationem gignit quod vir, divina impellente gratia uxorem, filios, resque familiares penitus reliquerit, asperrimumque vitae genus per fere viginti annos in solitudine egerit, solo eucharistico pane, uti gravissimi testes affirmant, nutricatus.

In eremo quidem vitam duxit, sed ad eum plures consultum accedebant, vel ipsi maiores magistratus Pagorum, qui eum supremum arbitrum in gravissimis quoque politicis quaestionibus, quae bellum aut paraverant aut concitaverant, eligebant; quare insignis pacificator pluries evasit. Exterarum quoque dicionum oratores consilii petendi causa eum non raro adibant, sapientem eius sententiam exquirentes, parati eam persequi.

Quam Deo gratus Nicolaus extiterit, evidentissime quoque patuit ex signis seu miraculis, quibus sive dum vivebat, sive post eius mortem, quae die 21 Martii a. D. 1487 contigit, claruit: quae praecipue sanctitatis famam auxerunt atque longe lateque in aevum diffudere; quam, praeter innumeros alios, sancti Ecclesiae Doctores Petrus Canisius ac Robertus Bellarminus nec non S. Carolus Borromaeus testificantur. Praeterea voto cuncti populi Helvetiae, imprimis vero Obwaldensis Pagi, Constantiensi Episcopo non refragante, liturgicus cultus mature erupit, qui a S. R. C. recognitus, ab Innocentio Papa decimo die 1 Februarii a. 1649 fuit confirmatus; quare aequipollenti beatificatione Servus Dei fuit auctus. Verum generosa Helvetia gens merito non acquiescit. Suum porro insigniorem, prae ceteris, filium canonizationis formalis honoribus decorari vehementissime exoptat.

Quocirca Apostolica auctoritate super duabus miris sanationibus, ad B. Nicolai invocationem, a Deo patratis, processum fieri obtinuit, de

cuius iuridica vi ac efficacia favorabile decretum die 16 Iulii mensis 1941 editum est.

I. Prior sanatio in oppido Egerkingen intra Dioecesis Basileensis fines contigit. Bertha Schürmann encephalomyelite disseminata affecta fuerat. Prognosim omnino infaustam, saltem quod ad valetudinem, cum medicus a cura tum tres periti, ab hac Sacra Congregatione adlecti, concorditer sine haesitatione affirmant. Porro, unice B. Nicolao invocato, in physico instanti, die 18 Maii, in festo Ascensionis Domini, a. 1939, Bertha illico sanata est; quam sanationem duplex physica medicorum inspectio plene confirmavit. Iidem periti miraculum esse agnoscendum conclamant.

II. Sanatio altera in oppido Sachseln, in quo sacrum Beati corpus asservatur, evenit. Ida Jeker genuina epilepsia, chronica neurite atque cutanea ulceratione in sinistro brachio fuit affecta; quae ulceratio a die 4 Aprilis mensis a. 1937 eam vexare coepit, atque in tota sua vi ad sanationem usque permansit. Putre ulcus late patebat. Notare quoque est sinistrum brachium per plures annos aliquatenus torpens fuisse, proinde, fere atrophicum factum, per trimestre vero omnino torpidum. Remediis incassum cedentibus, Ida cum suis die 26 Iunii a. 1937 ad B. Nicolai sepulcrum est peregrinata, se ab Eo fore sanandam confidens. Nec fiduciam fefellit eventus. Ulceris enim loco inducta pellis nova statim est; brachium vires illico perfecte recuperavit, adeo ut post biduum Ida ligna cadere valuerit. Officiales periti miraculum agnoscunt.

De his sanationibus, iuris ordine servato, prius in Antepreparatorio coetu coram subscripto Cardinali die 28 Iulii a. 1942; in Praeparatorio coram ceteris Cardinalibus Sacrae huic Congregationi addictis, die 9 Novembris sequenti anno: demum in Generali coram Ss^{mo} D. N. Pio Papa XII die 14 nuper elapsi mensis disceptatum est, in quo idem Cardinalis dubium de more posuit: *An et de quibus miraculis constet, post indultam ab Apostolica Sede Eidem Beato venerationem, in casu et ad effectum de quo agitur Rev^{mi} Cardinales, Officiales Praelati Patresque Consultores suum quisque animi sensum aperuit.* Beatissimus vero Pater suffragia haec intento excepit animo: at suam edere sententiam ad hanc usque diem distulit; Dominicam tertiam post Pascha, inclitae Senensi Virgini Catharinae, Italiae Patronae sacram, ingeminare preces hortatus, ut caeleste lumen suis aliorumque precibus imploraret.

Quapropter ad Se eundem Cardinalem, R. P. Salvatorem Natucci, meque Secretarium advocavit, sacraque oblata Hostia edixit: *Constare de duobus miraculis, Beato Nicolao de Flüe intercedente, a Deo patrat; nempe: De instantanea perfectaue sanatione cum Berthae Schürmann ab encephalomyelite disseminata, tum Idae Jeker a gravi neurite chronica et ab ulceratione cutanea in brachio sinistro.*

Hoc autem decretum ad normam iuris promulgari et in acta S. Rituum Congregationis referri mandavit.

Datum Romae, die 30^a Aprilis a. D. 1944.

✠ C. Card. SALOTTI, Ep. Praen., Praefectus.

PARISH PROBLEMS

SERMON DODGERS

IF, in a meditative mood, a parish priest were to estimate how many of this dutiful parishioners regularly hear a sermon or instruction of any kind he would receive a shock. It can easily happen in a parish where the average Sunday attendance, spread out over five or six Masses, is never less than a thousand, that hardly more than a hundred and fifty ever hear a sermon. Our traditional way of assuming that the Sung Mass, usually the latest, is the principal one and therefore the right and proper Mass at which to preach a sermon, is partly responsible. In many places the congregation at the High Mass is always a small one made up of a few liturgical enthusiasts, a good company of elderly and invalid persons, and an assortment of wearied little children doing vicarious service for their lazy parents. The majority of our people prefer to go to an early Mass, some because they find it more convenient, some, as they will frankly admit, because they find a Sung Mass with a sermon too long, and not a few because they are professional sermon dodgers. A midday Mass is always a success and ensures a full church. But there is much to be said against the practice: it puts an unnecessary strain upon the clergy; it sometimes places neighbouring parishes at an unfair disadvantage; and where, as is so often the case, there are no incidentals beyond a quick reading of the notices and the Epistle and Gospel, it encourages a bad habit on the part of mean-souled Catholics who are content to cram the whole of their religious life into the shortest possible weekly observance.

One can imagine a discouraged pastor, especially if he be one of those to whom preaching does not come easily, finding comfort in the thought that the flock seems to get on quite well without his sermons, and that perhaps, after all, in these feverish days the ministry of the word is not so important as the serving of tables in the form of some or other social and philanthropic activity. No doubt the graces which flow from the Holy Sacrifice and the gift of faith are to many their hidden strength. But ignorance is always a danger. Do we not frequently encounter alarming examples of ignorance even on elementary points of Christian doctrine in the most unexpected quarters? Ignorance is undoubtedly the explanation of so many of those painful lapses which occur in the ranks of those who to all appearances are thoroughly reliable. Preaching is a duty second only in importance to the offering of the Sacrifice and the administering of the Sacraments, and anyone who finds his courage drooping can recover it quickly enough by reading the appropriate Canons in the Code and the pastoral pronouncements of Pope Pius X.

The ideal solution of the problem of sermon dodgers would be to have a short sermon at every Mass. Here at once a difficulty arises from the fact that for many priests the effort of having to preach fasting is an almost insurmountable physical hardship, and it would be hardly possible to have a sermon at each Mass unless the celebrant were also the preacher. From the faithful might come a protest that they too, or many of them, would find it equally trying to have to play the part of fasting listeners.

Surely the problem resolves itself into a matter of adjustment. The short sermons could be made very short indeed, not more than five or six minutes in length: it is surprising what an amount of solid instruction can be packed into such brief limits provided that there is careful preparation, and that, instead of jumping from one subject to another to suit the Gospel of the day, a regular course based on the catechism is followed. As a matter of fact it is possible, with a little ingenuity, to link up such a course with the gospels, and this has been admirably demonstrated by the editors of the *Homiletic Review*. Everything depends upon timing: by keeping the notices strictly to what is needed, eschewing those tempting picturesque notes and humorous comments, not to mention scoldings, whereby they are sometimes expanded several times beyond the length of what is written in the book, many valuable minutes can be saved so that even with a short sermon a low Mass will not exceed the normal time, neither will greater exertion be exacted from oneself or from the people. Time and effort can also be saved by putting the weekly list of Masses on the notice board and simply referring to it, instead of reading it out in entirety.

Would it not be a help if we were to adopt the continental custom of omitting the Epistle, often completely unintelligible, and confine the vernacular reading to the Gospel only? Canon 1345 recommends: "... brevis Evangelii aut alicujus partis doctrinae christianae explanatio . . ." but says nothing about the Epistle.

The short sermon should be a feature of the Sung Mass also. The days of pulpit eloquence in the grand manner are departed. In parish life nowadays it is the plainly and straightforwardly argued disquisition in conversational style, such as we would give in instructing a convert, that attracts. Fine sermons are better kept for evening services and great occasions. There is a streak of paradox in sermon dodging: men are in truth very much interested in sermons, but sermons have to be made interesting for them.

J. P. R.

BOOK REVIEWS

Introductio in Codicem. By R. P. Udalricus Beste, O.S.B. Pp. 1000. (St. John's Abbey Press, Collegeville, Minn., U.S.A.)

THIS is the second edition of a book which, since its first appearance in 1938, has secured a deservedly high place amongst manuals of Canon Law. The chief feature about the work which distinguishes it from most others is that the author has refrained from reprinting the canons of the Code, and is content with giving us a commentary only when it is necessary for a right understanding of the law. Another feature is that, accepting for good or ill the fact that the moral theologians are accustomed to explain the Code on the Sacraments, Dr. Beste leaves them to it, and beyond citing under the appropriate canons any fresh decisions from the Holy See, he refrains from an extensive commentary on the Sacraments, with the exception of Holy

Orders. This method of treatment is, for an enthusiastic canonist, a considerable act of self-denial, but the author is rewarded by achieving a brevity and succinctness which is the most attractive quality of his work. Frequently having occasion to consult the commentators on the Code, we have always found Dr. Beste's book accurate and enlightening, and if, in addition to a Code and the *Fontes*, we were permitted only one volume of a commentator, this is the one that we should choose.

The author is at present rector of St. Anselm in Rome and a consultor of the Holy Office, and is thus well established at the source of canonical wisdom. But he writes, not so much for his brethren in Rome, as for those in America, and he is well informed about the conditions under which the Church functions in that country, conditions which are not vastly dissimilar from those in our own. Problems connected, for example, with the legal method of holding church property, or with its alienation, need interpreting in accordance with the local conditions, and Dr. Beste is a sure guide on such matters.

Notwithstanding the addition of much extra material in this second edition, namely, the inclusion of Roman documents and decisions which have appeared during the last six years, the book remains of exactly the same size as its predecessor, and for the most part the contents are arranged under exactly the same pagination. This is a distinct advantage for seminaries which use this commentary as a text-book. The clergy who already possess the first edition are not advised to purchase this volume: it is substantially identical with the edition of 1938, except for the addition of recent legislation, which can easily be gathered from other sources. But those who do not own a copy, or who desire a recent and reliable manual of canon law, can be strongly recommended to get this book.

E. J. M.

The "Rhythm" in Marriage and Christian Morality. By N. Orville Grieser, S.T.D., J.C.L. Pp. 131. (Newman Bookshop, Westminster, Maryland. \$2.25).

UNDER the guidance of Rev. Francis J. O'Connell, C.S.S.R., of the Catholic University of Washington, Dr. Grieser has presented for his doctorate thesis a study of what is better known amongst us in this country as the Safe Period. In composing this excellent book, the author has consulted and weighed everything which theologians have written on the subject, particularly since the discovery of the new computation by Ogino & Knaus. One must admire the author's industry and, whilst doing so, envy him his facilities of access to all the current theological literature on the subject. The result is a contribution to our understanding of the matter which is of the utmost value.

The author's contention is that the practice of periodic continence according to the "Safe Period" method, considered as a system in marital relations, is objectively unlawful, though justifiable in individual cases if there is a just cause. It is the view of Salsmans, the *continuator* of Génicot, and of some others, but the majority view is, at the moment, more liberal: the practice is, say they, in itself and objectively lawful, though frequently unjustifiable in individual cases. We have here a variation of emphasis which is of con-

siderable interest, not only for this subject but for the scholastic theory of morals in general. Dr. Griese is very much alive to the difficulties attending his view, which necessitates, as is evident, a distinction between what is objectively unlawful and what is intrinsically unlawful; for it is not in dispute that an action which is intrinsically evil from its object can never become good even in one individual case. His point is well argued, and we are inclined to think that, if the matter is ever the subject of an official Roman decision, the Holy See will view it in the sense Dr. Griese has defended.

In deprecating an unmeasured propaganda amongst Catholics of this method of controlling birth, the author is indubitably right, and it is very satisfactory that this conservative thesis on the Safe Period and its use has been published in a country where excesses of propaganda have been most evident. It is for this reason, no doubt, that the word "Rhythm" occurs in the title, for this was the word used to popularize the practice by the Latz Foundation. There is still room for another thesis on the subject, defining the extent to which propaganda is to be permitted. The author gives a considerable list of cases in which the use of the Safe Period is justifiable, and if this is so the people concerned are entitled to know all about it. Probably the best practical line to take is that the action is at least venially sinful without a just cause; this is an outlook which the people will easily understand, notwithstanding the fact that the majority of theologians would perhaps express it differently.

E. J. M.

Dicente te in ecclesia non clamor populi, sed gemitus suscitetur; lacrimae auditorum laudes tuae sint; sermo presbyteri scripturarum lectione conditus sit. Nolo te declamatorem esse et rabulam garrulumque, sed mysteriorum peritum et sacramentorum Dei tui eruditissimum. Verba volvere et celeritate dicendi apud imperitum vulgus admirationem sui facere, indoctorum hominum est. . . . Nihil tam facile, quam vilem plebeculam et indoctam contionem linguae volubilitate decipere, quae, quidquid non intelligit, plus miratur. (St. Jerome, Ep. LII.)

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